

OPUS OPERANS, OPUS OPERATUM : A THOMISTIC INTERPRETATION
OF A SACRAMENTAL FORMULA

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OPUS OPERANS, OPUS OPERATUM :

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OF A SACRAMENTAL FORMULA

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ad gradum DOCTORATUS IN SACRA THEOLOGIA

super materiam OPUS OPERANS, OPUS OPERANTUM, A THOMISTIC INTERPRE-
TATION OF A SACRAMENTAL FORMULA.

et iudicamus eam approbandam esse cum nota 20 x 20

Animadversiones nostrae hic a tergo dantur.

Romae, die 24 mensis iunii anni 1957

Examinatores:

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G. Kearns, O.P.

ANIMADVERSIONES

Thema difficilissimum, vixit nec minus difficil-
lem solutionem attulit quaestioni, nempe, subiectum
sacramenti partes activas et intrinsecas habere in
ipso sacramento constitutivum. Maxime et optime
laboravit et amplem inquisitionem, etiam histori-
cam, instituit praestantem apud P. Thomam, sed
etiam apud alios scholasticos et interpretes P.
Thomae et theologo modernorum variorum lingua-
rum, etiam neerlandicae. Doctrinam profundam
et subtiliorem et aliquantulum novam, certe pers-
picuam proponit, non tamen clariorem, aequo
sufficientis distinctionibus. Disertatis elegantem con-
scripta et accurate transcripta.

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ABBREVIATIONS

1. Method of citing St Thomas's works.

In accordance with English usage, the Commentarium super Sententiis is referred to in the text as the Commentary on the Sentences or simply as the Sentences, whereas the other works retain their Latin titles, the Summa theologiae being referred to briefly as the Summa.

The generally accepted abbreviations are used in the notes. Thus, e.g. :

<u>In IV Sent.</u>	= <u>In quartum librum Sententiarum</u>
III	= <u>Tertia Pars Summae theologiae</u>
<u>Qd1. 6</u>	= <u>Quodlibetum sextum</u>
d. 2	= <u>distinctio secunda</u>
obj. 1	= <u>argumentum primum</u>
ad 1	= <u>responsio ad arg. primum</u>
etc.	

In lists of references one text is divided from the next by a semi-colon (;). In such lists, as a general rule, references common to a series of texts are not repeated. Thus, e.g. :

III, q. 60, a. 1; a. 2; ad 2 =
Tertia Pars Summae theologiae, q. 60, a. 1;
 " " " " " a. 2;
 " " " " " " ad 2;
 etc.

In references to the Sentences, 'qla.' (= quaestiuncula) is used of the title and objections; 'sol.' (= solutio) of the corresponding reply. For the sake of convenience a reference to page and paragraph number of the Moos edition is added in parentheses to texts up to In IV Sent., d. 22, inclusive.

2. References to periodicals and collections.

- AAS 'Acta Apostolicae Sedis'.
- Ang. 'Angelicum' (Pontif. Athenaeum 'Angelicum', Rome).
- CCL Corpus Christianorum. Series Latina (Turnhout, Belgium)
- Denz. Enchiridion symbolorum, definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum, H. Denzinger - C. Bannwart - I. B. Umberg, S.J., 27th ed., Barcelona, 1951.
- DTF 'Divus Thomas' ('Albertinum', Freiburg, Switzerland).
- Greg. 'Gregorianum' (Pontif. Univers. 'Gregorianum', Rome).
- IER 'Irish Ecclesiastical Record' (St Patrick's College, Maynooth, Ireland).
- NRT 'Nouvelle revue théologique' (Collège de philos. et de théol., Louvain).
- PG Patres Graeci, Migne edition.

- PL Patres Latini, Migne edition
- RSPT 'Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques'
(Faculté de philos. et théol., Le Saulchoir,
Etiolles).
- RTAM 'Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale'
(Abbaye de Mont César, Louvain).
- RT 'Revue thomiste' (Ecole de théologie, St-Maximin,
Var.).
- TS 'Theological Studies' (Jesuit Provinces, U.S.A.).
- ZKT 'Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie' (Theol.
Fakultät, Innsbruck).

I n t r o d u c t i o n

To distinguish the sacraments of the Church from other religious practices Catholic theologians say that, whereas the latter are ~~latter are~~ efficacious ex opere operantis or solely by reason of the merit of the faithful, the former produce their effects ex opere operato. This description of the sacraments - which was used by the Council of Trent - by attributing to them intrinsic efficacy, is in contrast to the Protestant notion of sacraments as nothing more than public professions of faith and fellowship. In very much the same way the Scholastics of the late-twelfth and thirteenth centuries, who introduced the formula to theology, distinguished between the sacraments of the New Law and those of the Old. In this limited field the distinction serves admirably, but the fact that it is open

to misinterpretation when its scope is lost sight of is made clear by the admonition of Pope Pius XII in his Encyclical letter, Mediator Dei, where he finds it necessary to insist that

'in the spiritual life there can be no discrepancy or opposition ... between the ex-opere-operato efficacy of the external sacrament and the meritorious action, the opus operantis as we call it, of its minister or recipient' (1).

In recent years especially, theologians have been at some pains to remove any such misunderstanding. Efficacy ex opere operato in the sacraments, they explain, has no trace of magic about it; it does not exempt the subject from disposing himself by personal effort and devotion. Though the grace given in the sacraments is won by the merit of Christ rather than of the subject, it is measured according to the devotion of the subject.

In spite of this the ambiguity in some degree re-

(1) - PIUS XII, Mediator Dei: 'In spirituali igitur vita nulla intercedere potest discrepantia vel repugnantia ... inter externi sacramentorum ritus efficacitatem, quae ex opere operato oritur, atque eorum bene merentem actum, qui eadem impertiunt vel suscipiunt, quem quidem actum opus operantis vocamus' (AAS 39 (1947) p. 537).

mains, implicit in the present form of the technical term. Opus operatum is set on one side, the sacrament that is given and that causes grace by reason of the merits of Christ; the action of the subject, opus operantis, is set on the other, side, reception of the opus operatum and of grace. It is made to appear as if everything that has to be done is done, operatum, before the subject intervenes and that he simply submits at the end of the action. Medieval theologians did not use the terminology in quite the same way. They contrasted opus operatum and opus operans (not operantis), the latter indicating not so much dispositions for receiving sacramental grace as ~~meritorious~~ use of the sacraments by minister and subject. This shifts the emphasis - it does no more - from the passivity of the subject to his activity and likewise from the opus operatum as cause to the opus operatum as the object of action.

St Thomas maintains this emphasis when he says that the sacraments are acts of worship and when he says that they are professions of faith. St Thomas

was not a Protestant; but he enjoyed the freedom of not having to appear not to be such. He was not afraid to build his sacramental theology round notions that make modern theologians a little anxious.

A theology of the participation of the faithful in the sacramental life of the Church must be founded on an account of the relation between these two notions, opus operatum and opus operans. The purpose of this study is to present such an account based on St Thomas's teaching. A certain difficulty of terminology presents itself at once. St Thomas's use of the formula, opus operans, opus operatum, is confined, for practical purposes, to the Sentences. For his definitive teaching on the sacraments in the Summa he finds other expressions. If this teaching is to be correlated with modern theology, however, it must be formulated in the terms that the modern theologian understands and in which he states his problems. For this reason the first chapter is devoted to a detailed examination of what the terms meant for St Thomas when he used them - a question of vocabulary that imposes a study of the terms in the usage of the

theological schools of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. For the same reason the conclusions of the remaining chapters are formulated in this terminology.

A purely material transference of the terms from the Sentences to the context of the Summa is not possible because of the considerable modifications that St Thomas's sacramental teaching undergoes between these two works. To guide the application the second chapter outlines St Thomas's general approach in the Summa to the sacramental system. This chapter also serves as the necessary background for the third and fourth chapters which set out the relations between the acts of the subject and the sacrament, and between opus operans and opus operatum. The third chapter considers the function of the subject's intention which is required for validity. The fourth chapter deals with the sacraments as acts of worship. This final chapter has two parts: the first on the reception of the sacraments; the second on the participation of the faithful in the Mass.

A most important contribution to sacramental theology recently published is the work of Dr. H. Schillebeeckx,

O.P., De sacramentele heilseconomie (2). The indebtedness of the present study to Dr. Schillebeeckx is indicated in the notes. What cannot be indicated in this fashion is the influence of innumerable insights into St Thomas's mind afforded by a reading of this valuable work. In concentrating on a more limited field, it is hoped that the present study may present a fuller, and perhaps in a few details a closer, account of some aspects of St Thomas's teaching than is to be found in so highly personal and so wide-ranging a work as that of Dr Schillebeeckx. In particular this study attempts to bring out the significance for sacramental theology of St Thomas's notion of the baptismal character. He calls it an instrumental power and a participation in the priesthood of Christ; both of these ideas ^{are} rich and suggestive; yet theologians, for the most part, have paid it scant attention apart from rehearsing the old disputes about its nature and subject. It is suggested that the reason for this is that they misinterpret what St Thomas meant by calling the priestly character instrumental, and

(2) - Dr H. SCHILLEBEECKX, O.P., De sacramentele heilseconomie, Antwerp, 1952.

consequently can find no meaning for a like description of the baptismal character. John of St Thomas alone provides an adequate explanation, which is bound up with his profound theology of sign.

It is with this notion of sign that this study is primarily concerned; and it may be well to make it clear at once that the causality of the sacraments is throughout taken for granted as the teaching of the Church, as is also the theory of their physical causality.

A study of this nature must begin with a number of postulates concerning grace, redemption and the sacraments, and this inevitably involves choosing a 'school' of interpretation of St Thomas. This study places itself in the tradition of the principal Dominican commentators; and only in so far as it adheres to this tradition is any claim made that it is 'Thomistic'.

CHAPTER ONE

THE TERMS "OPUS OPERANS" AND "OPUS OPERATUM" IN THE THEOLOGY OF THE TWELFTH AND THIRTEENTH CENTURIES.

Summary: Introduction. Philological note. Introduction of the terminology into Scholasticism. The Scholastics on the question: Was justification to be found in the sacraments of the Old Law? Use by St Thomas's immediate predecessors and contemporaries. St Thomas: Opus operans in the Sentences. Opus operatum in the Sentences. Later works. Appendix: Note on Burgundio's translation of De fide orthodoxa. Conclusions.

Between modern theologians and the medieval Scholastics there lies the barrier of a common language. It is a barrier that may be overcome only by a painstaking reconstruction of the climate of thought that surrounds the single words and phrases that make up the theological vocabulary of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. This effort of positive theology has more than a merely historical value. The language of modern manuals has grown, under the tutelage of the Church, out of the language of the medieval Sentences and Summae; and a clear idea of the philological and historical origins of the words we use today helps to clarify the ideas that we express by these words. For a theology that is based on the teaching of St Thomas the need for this inquiry is

all the more urgent in that such a theology is, in the first instance, a theology of a body of writings.

The terms, opus operans, opus operatum, have a particular historical interest for the student of St Thomas because they represented for him something in the nature of a recent development in theological vocabulary. He was conscious of their comparative novelty and he can be seen exploring their possibilities and limitations and fashioning them into a new instrument of theology. To discover exactly what he understood by them it is proposed in this chapter to examine the use made of them by those who introduced them into theology, and by St Thomas's immediate predecessors and contemporaries. This serves as a background for a detailed examination of the places where St Thomas uses the terms, and for a discussion of their curious disappearance from his later works. First, a note on the meaning of the words themselves.

Philological note.

The Latinity of the phrases, opus operans, opus operatum has occasioned some amusement to critics of Scholasticism with a taste for the classics. It is sufficient to point

out that these are technical terms; but it may also be noted that their illegitimacy is not as certain as their critics seem to think. The following information is to be found in Forcellini (1) :

Opus, -eris = what is produced by an action (id quod fit operando). In its non-technical sense it differs from opera which designates the action by which the opus is produced; sometimes, however, it is used (for example, by Cicero) for opera.

Operor, -ari, -atus sum; deponent verb, first conjug.; = place an action, do something (operam in aliqua re pono; opus facio) (2).

Operans, -antis: pres. participle from operor; used in the sense 'who, or which, acts' (qui operatur); so, Pliny and Tertullian, among others.

Operatus, -a, -um: past participle from operor; used in active sense by Virgil and Horace; in a passive sense by Tertullian, Praescript., 29 : 'Tot opera fidei perperam administrata, tot charismata perperam operata'; and by Lactantius, 7, 27: 'Susceptis, operatis virtutibus'.

In Christian literature, at least, therefore, the construction, opus operatum, in a passive sense, represents no barbarism. It can be used in this way to distinguish opus, action, as an effect, from opus,

(1) - Aegidius FORCELLINI, Totius latinitatis lexicon, Patavia, 1830.

(2) - The use of this verb for alms-giving is interesting on account of the context in which opus operatum appears in the twelfth century.

action, as proceeding from the agent, the latter being termed opus operans.

Du Cange notes a use of the phrase opus operatum in Germany as a legal and commercial term signifying the object produced, the artefact (3).

In twelfth-century theology terminology and distinctions of similar construction - for example, voluntas volens, voluntas volita, and gratia gratis dans, gratia datis data (4) - were not uncommon.

Introduction of the terminology into Scholasticism.

Though the theologians of the thirteenth century freely use opus operans, opus operatum when they are discussing the value of the sacraments of the Old Law, they show that they are aware of the comparative novelty of the terms. Their two principal source-books, the De Sacramentis of Hugh of St Victor (d. 1141) (5) and the Sentences of Peter Lombard (d.1159),

(3) - DU CANGE, Glossarium ad scriptores mediae et infimae latinitatis, Graz, 1954: 'Opus operatum: artificium opera venalia'; with a reference to the entry 'Innunge' where a quotation is given from the Diploma of Archbishop Wichmann of Magdeburg using the phrase so.

(4) - See below.

(5) - PL 176 173-618.

have no trace of this vocabulary. The crucial period for this inquiry, therefore, are the forty odd years at the end of the twelfth century. The manuscripts, for the most part unpublished, relevant to the question have been studied by Bishop Arthur Landgraf from the point of view of the historian (6).

The history of the introduction of the terminology can be traced out, though with some degree of uncertainty, in these early Scholastic writings. Rarely and tentatively at first, but with growing frequency and assurance as the century draws to a close, the terms are to be found applied in the form of a distinction to solve problems which have a moral bearing. One context in which it recurs is the discussion of the morality of the crucifixion: how could it be a good work if it was prompted by the malice of the Jews? It is applied at an early stage to the sacraments, but even here

(6) - A. LANDGRAF, Dogmengeschichte der Frühscholastik, Dritter Teil: Die Lehre von den Sakramenten, Band I, Regensburg, 1954, pp. 53 f., 145 f.; incorporating articles published in ZKT 57 (1933) pp. 245-252, and DTF 29 (1951) pp. 211-223, and giving some additional information. The present notes depend largely on these places which should be consulted for full lists of MSS etc. The dates given are taken from P. GLORIEUX, Répertoire des maîtres en théologie de Paris au XIII^e siècle, 2 vols., Paris, 1933, and J. DE GHELLINCK, S.J., Le mouvement théologique du XII^e siècle, 2 ed. Bruges, Brussels, Paris, 1948.

it retains its moral orientation.

Some historians (7) have suggested that the terms originated in the Sentences of Peter of Poitiers (written before 1176) where they are used of the crucifixion problem and more generally of the works of the devil, and also of the sacrament of baptism. God approved the crucifixion as an opus operatum, not as an opus operans, that is, not as a sinful action of the Jews. The administration of baptism, as an action of the minister, an opus operans, can be meritorious, in contrast to baptism itself which is an opus operatum (8). The sense of the distinction made is clearly

(7) - Cf. C. VON SCHAEZLER, Die Lehre von der Wirksamkeit der Sakramente ex opere operato in ihrer Entwicklung innerhalb der Scholastik und ihrer Bedeutung für die christliche Heilslehre dargestellt, Munich, 1860, p.3; A. MICHEL, art. Opus operatum, opus operantis, DTC XI (1931), col. 1084.

(8) - PETER OF POITIERS, Sententiarum, lib. 1, c. 16 (PL 211 863); 'Omnia (Deo) serviunt, id est ei praestant materiam laudis, et diabolus ei servit et approbat eius opera, quae operatur, non quibus operatur; opera operata, ut dici solet, non opera operantia, quae omnia mala sunt, quia nulla ex caritate. Sicut Deus approbavit passionem Christi illatam a iudaeis et quod fuit opus iudaeorum operatum; non approbavit opera iudaeorum operantia et actiones quibus operati sunt illam passionem - pro actione enim diaboli offenditur Deus, sed non pro acto '. Ib. lib. 5, c. 6 (PL 211 1235): 'Similiter meretur baptismatione, ut baptizatio dicitur actio illius qui baptizat, quae est aliud opus

the same in both cases; but Peter of Poitiers is more conscious of making an innovation when he applies it to baptism, as witness his ut ita liceat loqui. On the other hand, the qualification ut dici solet attached to the use of the terms in the crucifixion problem suggests an earlier source. Landgraf has found the expression in the Gloss on the Sentences erroneously attributed to Peter of Poitiers (9), many parts of which are of earlier date (10). This does not use the terms of the crucifixion, but for solving the question whether the sacraments of the Old Law could justify, an application that will have wide currency among the later Scholastics. Apart from the difficulty of dating individual parts of this Gloss, however, this application does not explain Peter of Poitier's appeal to usage to justify the terminology in relation to the crucifixion.

Stephen Langton (d. 1228) offers a clue as to ^{the origin of} the terms

./ - quam baptismus, quia est opus operans, sed baptismus est opus operatum, ut ita liceat loqui'.

(9) - Cf. A. LANDGRAF, Notes de critique textuelle sur les Sentences de Pierre Lombard, RTAM 2 (1930) pp. 80-99.

(10) - Dated 1160-1165 by De Ghellinck, op. cit., p. 268. Landgraf considers it a collection of variously dated elements; Dogmengeschichte..., III/1, p. 155.

by asserting that the first to use them was Gilbert of Porrée (Master at Chartres, 1124-1137) (11). Landgraf has found no trace of this in Gilbert or in his immediate school (12). The later Porretana school, however, freely uses the terms as self-explanatory - an indication that they were well-known at that time. Raoul Ardent, in his Speculum universale (written between 1179 and 1215), uses them in an explanation of merit. Even though Nabuchodonosor may have laid waste Tyre from an evil motive, he received a reward from God because of the opus operatum, the thing he had done (in accordance with the designs of God). This had no relation to his own merits, his opus operans (13). The anonymous Summa of Cod. Bamberg.Patr. 136, belonging to the same school, uses opus operans of

(11) - STEPHEN LANGTON, Comment. in Rom., c. 7

(12) - Cf. A. LANDGRAF, Untersuchungen zu den Eigenlehren Gilberts de la Porrée, ZKT 54 (1930) pp. 180-213.

(13) - RAOUL ARDENT, Speculum universale, lib. 5, c. 46 :
'... Oppones michi de Nabugodo[nosor], qui quia servierat Domino in vastatione Tiri, dedit ei Dominus, ut ipse dicit per prophetam, Egiptum in remunerationem. Ad quod respondeo, quoniam non remuneravit Dominus op<er>us operans, sed potius operatum. Vel forte bono fine vastavit Nabugó[donosor] Tirum, eo scilicet, quod eius nocet iniquitatem.' (Cod. Vat. lat. 1175 I, fol. 75; Landgraf, Dogmengeschichte, vol. cit., p. 149).

meritorious action in contrast to enjoyment, frui, which is a gift of God, an (opus) operatum. This use of opus operatum is unusual in that it designates an effect, not of the agent of the opus operans, but of God. The formal point of the distinction, namely, the contrast with opus operans, the moral activity of the agent, remains (14). Simon of Tournai (d. 1203) uses the terms to solve the question of whether an employer is responsible for his agent's action. Each merits reward or punishment according as he carried out, or ordered, the thing done (opus operatum) with good or bad intentions (opus operans) (15).

The Porretana school uses the terms too for solving the crucifixion problem; though for Simon of Tournai the

-
- (14) - Summa (anon.) of Cod. Bamberg. Patr. 136; 'Alii tamen dicunt, quod frui est tantum premium, non meritum licet (fol. 49v) enim sit opus vie, non tamen est opus operans, sed operatum in nobis a Deo; et licet sit donum gratuitum, non tamen virtus vel virtutis opus'. (Fol. 49 f.; Landgraf, op. cit., p. 149).
- (15) - SIMON OF TOURNAI, Disput.; 'Aliud est opus operans, aliud opus operatum. Opere operante, id est actione, qua agit, meretur servus premium, si bono, supplicium, si malo animo est agens. Opus vero operatum, id est, id quod fit a ministro, facit ad premium mandantis, si bono animo, vel ad supplicium, si malo animo mandavit ...' (J. WARICHEZ, Les disputationes de Simon de Tournai, Spic.sac.Lov., fasc. 12, Louvain, 1932, p.280; cf. Landgraf, op. cit., p. 149).

contrast here is between opus operatum and operatio (16).

Alan of Lille, Simon's contemporary (d. 1201 or 1202), has both terms (17) as has the Summa of Cod. Bamberg. Patr.136 in this context (18). The quoted texts of this school use the terms in the same fashion as Peter of Poitiers, but nothing has been found of sufficiently early date to account for his ut dici solet.

Landgraf is of the opinion, therefore, in spite of Stephen Langton, that this phrase refers, not to the Porretana school, but to the Quaestiones literature that grew up round the teaching of Odo of Ourscamp (d. after 1171). Comparison of the text of Peter's Bk. 1, ch. 16 (19) with Cod. Paris. Mazar. 1708, fol. 242, shows a close similarity. Landgraf quotes also the Quaestiones of Cod. Brit. Mus. Harley 3855, fol. 32v, and Troyes Cod. lat. 964, from Odo's circle, both dealing with the crucifixion problem and both having the

(16) - SIMON OF TOURNAI, Summa; cf. Landgraf, op. cit., p. 150.

(17) - ALAN OF LILLE, Liber in distinctionibus dictionum theologicarum (PL 210 883 G).

(18) - Cf. Landgraf, op. cit., p. 151; so also Cod. Brit. Mus. Royal 9 E XII (fol. 83v) - Landgraf, ib.

(19) - PL 211 863; quoted above, note 8; cf. Landgraf, op. cit., p. 152.

two terms of the distinction. He concludes that it was this group of writers that Peter of Poitiers had in mind as the originators of the terminology.

Peter of Capua in his Summa theologica (written 1201-1202), normally dependent on Peter of Poitiers, follows him in this also and uses the terminology of the crucifixion - it is the sole occurrence of the kind in his work (20).

Peter the Chanter (d. 1197) solves another moral problem by means of opus operatum contrasted with actio. An attempt at murder which fails of its purpose is equally sinful with actual murder. The death of the victim which was intended is the opus operatum; but moral responsibility has been established even before its realization (21). This author

(20) - Cf. Landgraf, op. cit., p. 152.

(21) - PETER THE CHANTER, Summa de sacramentis et anime consiliis: 'In invio similiter quantum intendis, tantum facis, supple si facis, id est si exerces actionem, qua possit expleri opus operatum, quod intendis facere, tantum peccas, acsi opus operatum complevisse. Verbi gratia intendis occidere patrem, dirigis sagittam, illa incidit casu in lapidem, eque reus es, acsi implevisse opus operatum, quod intendis, id est interfectionem patris, quia exercuisti actionem illam id est directionem sagitte, qua posset ipse occidi'. (Cod. Paris. Nat. lat. 9593, fol. 186v; Landgraf, op. cit., p. 153).

gives an indication too of how the term came to be formed: opus, scilicet operatum (22). Operatum determines more precisely opus. Elsewhere he uses opus operans of an action considered as belonging to an agent (23).

When the terminology was first applied to the sacraments is difficult to decide, all the more so as the dating of some manuscripts is a matter of conjecture. The main bridge which brought the terminology from the purely moral questions in which it first appeared to sacramental theology was the problem of the power of justification to be attributed to the sacraments of the Old Law. Individual applications were made independently of this, but always in connection with moral problems.

Landgraf narrows down the search for the place where

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- (22) - PETER THE CHANTER, De tropis loquendi: 'Sed attende quattuor; opus, scilicet operatum, et libertatem arbitrii et actionem, que tria a Deo sunt et placent ei, et malitiam actionis, que est a diabolo vel homine'. (Cod. Vat. Reg. lat. 1283, fol. 54; cf. Landgraf, op. cit., p. 154).
- (23) - PETER THE CHANTER, Quaestiones, Cod. Vat. Reg. lat. 411, fol. 27 (cf. Landgraf, ib.).

the application was first made to three possibilities: the circle of Odo of Ourscamp (d. after 1171), that of Peter of Poitiers, or the Porretana school.

The Quaestiones of Cod. Vat. Reg. lat. 135, of Odo's circle, draws a parallel between the crucifixion problem and the question of whether a bishop guilty of simony can validly ordain (24).

The pseudo-Poitiers Gloss as already noted, introduces the terminology into the discussion on the efficacy of the sacraments of the Old Law (25). Though the relation between Peter of Poitiers and this Gloss is difficult to determine

(24) - Quaestiones of Cod. Vat. Reg. lat. 135: 'Nos dicimus, quia opus operans eius, id est actio eius, mala est; sed opus operatum, id est opus, in quo [sic] transit actio eius, bonum est, sicut iudeis dicitur, quia operati sunt bonum opus, id est mortem Christi, licet actio eorum pessima fuerit '. (Cf. Landgraf, op. cit., p. 148).

(25) - PSEUDO-POITIERS Gloss : 'Quod ergo ait Augustinus: non iustificabant (sacramenta VL) intelligendum est secundum (quoddam): ex vi sua, ut sit haec differentia inter sacramenta legalia et evangelica, quod legalia non iustificabant ex vi sua, sed ex vi caritatis, ex qua fiebant, Quod forte tam de operatis, quam de operantibus volunt intelligi. Evangelica vero sacramenta ex vi sua iustificant ... Sed magistro non est visum, quod iustificarent etiam cum caritate facta, sive de operatis sive de operantibus intelligatur ...' (Cf. Landgraf, op. cit., p. 155).

since the Gloss is a collection whose parts are of varied date, Peter is certainly the first to apply the terminology to the merit gained by administering baptism (26). Here again, the distinction is simply an instrument for solving a moral problem, analagous to that of alms-giving.

The Summa of Cod. Bamberg. Patr. 136, of the Porretana school, is alone in attaching to the opus operatum of baptism an effect which is independent of the minister (27).

(26) - PETER OF POITIERS : Sententiarum, lib. 5, c. 6 (PL 211 1235; quoted above, note 8).

(27) - Summa (anon.) of Cod. Bamberg. Patr. 136: 'Nullus baptismus plus eligendus est alio. Et hec propositio est falsa: quodlibet opus huius est melius quolibet opere illius. Verum quidem est de opere operante, que est actio agentis, sed falsum de opere operato, quod est ipse baptismus, qui quasi effectus est operis operantis. Nam circa quodlibet opus duo consideratur opera, scilicet operans et operatum ... Similiter, si iste det elemosinam causa inanis glorie, aliud est opus operans in isto, id est datio elymosine, que est mortale peccatum in isto propter dandi modum; aliud est opus operatum, quod bonum est in genere suo, scilicet dare elemosinam'. (Fol. 64v; cf. Landgraf, op. cit., p. 156). - In spite of what L. says, there is no essential difference between this use of opus operatum and that of Peter of Poitiers. The distinction made by each is the same. Peter goes on to draw conclusions about opus operans; the Gloss does the like for opus operatum. Thus Peter says that the merit of the minister depends on his opus operans; the Gloss says that the opus operatum is independent of such merit, an idea implicit in the very distinction.

Landgraf concludes that the application to the sacraments was first made by the pseudo-Poitiers Gloss and that the application to baptism was made by either Peter of Poitiers himself or by the Summa of Cod. Bamberg. Patr. 136, according to the date of the latter (28).

The Scholastics on the question: Was justification to be found in the sacraments of the Old Law ?

Peter Lombard's opinion that the sacraments and sacrifices of the Old Law were in no way justifying, even by reason of the charity with which they were performed (29), was one of the regular subjects for discussion taken up by his commentators. It has already been seen that the pseudo-Poitiers Gloss introduced the opus operatum, opus operans terminology and distinction into this question. It passed down the line of theologians until it reached St Thomas who used it and declared that Lombard's opinion seemed absurd.

(28) - Note however that the text in the ps.-Poitiers Gloss uses the terms explicitly only of the Old-Law sacraments; of the New-Law sacraments it says that they justify ex vi sua.

(29) - Cf. IV Sent., d. 1.

The early manuscripts important for this matter have been examined by Landgraf. Those belonging to the early thirteenth century have received some notice from E. Filthaut, O.P., in a study on Roland of Cremona, the first Dominican master at Paris (30).

Landgraf has found a marginal gloss noting the distinction in Cod. Paris. Mazar. lat 758, on the Fourth Book of the Sentences, dist. 1. Stephen Langton in his commentary makes use of it (31). Prepositinus, one of the few to support the Magister, also has it (32). It follows the line of masters at Paris: William of Auxerre in his Summa aurea (written 1215-1220) (33); Roland of Cremona in his Summa

(30) - E. FILTHAUT, O.P., Roland von Cremona, O.P., und die Anfänge der Scholastik im Predigerorden. Ein Beitrag zur Geistesgeschichte der älteren Dominikaner. Vechta, 1936.

(31) - STEPHEN LANGTON, In I Sent., d.1, c.1 : 'Nota: omnes hostiae legales significant passionem Christi. Set ex hoc videtur, quod opera legis non iustificabant. Solutio: Opus operatum, id est passio operate rei non iustificat; similiter nec res, que fiebat; set opus operans, id est actio cum fide iustificabat'. (Naples, Bibl. Naz. Cod. VII C 14 fol. 86; cf. Landgraf, DTF 29 (1951) p. 223).

(32) - PREPOSITINUS, Summa: '... alii distinguunt inter opera operancia et inter opera operata ... acciones ... sanguis ...' (Univ. Erlangen, Cod. lat. 353, fol. 47v a; cf. Filthaut, op. cit., p. 162).

(33) - Cf. Filthaut, op. cit., p. 161: 'Von dem opus operans

theologica (34). Hugh of St Cher and Richard Fishacre, the first Dominican master at Oxford, both have the terminology and both speak of the opinion contrary to Lombard as that of the moderni; but, whereas Hugh agrees with the modern teaching, Fishacre prefers to return to that of the antiqui (35).

Filthaut makes the interesting observation that all these texts appear to come from a common source - Landgraf may be said to have traced this to the pseudo-Poitiers Gloss - and that this is the only appearance of the term-

./ - (scl. ipssa oblatio vituli) behauptet er die Rechtfertigung, während er dem opus operatum (scl. ipssa caro vituli) die rechtfertigende Kraft abspricht. In neuen Test. lässt er sowohl das opus operans als auch das opus operatum die Rechtfertigung bewirken.' (Basel Univ. B IV 10 p. 243 a.).

(34) - ROLAND OF CREMONA, Summa theologica, 'Distinguit magister petrus lumb. in sent. duplex opus: opus operans et opus operatum. Opus autem operans est ipssa oblatio ... opus operatum est vitulus vel hyrcus ... Opus operans si fiebat ex caritate justificabat ... Opus autem operatum non justificabat ... sua propria accione sicut justificant sacramenta novae legis.' (Cod. Paris. Mazar. lat. 795, fol. 72v b f.; cf. Filthaut, op. cit., p. 162).

(35) - HUGH OF ST CHER, In Sent.: 'Duplex est opus ... etc.... Ita modo dicunt omnes magistri et bene.' (Univ. Leipzig, Cod. lat. 573, fol. 209v b.) R. FISHACRE, In Sent.: 'Moderni magistri distinguunt ... etc.' (Oxford, Ball. Cod. lat. 57, fol. 227v a; cf. Filthaut, p. 162).

inology in the work of these theologians (36). It may further be remarked that the terms known to these theologians and to the originators in the twelfth century are opus operans and opus operatum. Ex opere operante, ex opere operato make no appearance. In all its various applications one member of the distinction, opus operans, preserves a single meaning: it designates an action of the agent as a morally imputable entity, whether for blame or for reward. The other member, opus operatum, is used to denote varying realities: the destruction of Tyre, the crucifixion, the giving of alms, the effect of the agent's action, the intended effect of the agent's action, an effect produced, not by the agent, but by God, the victim of the Old-Testament sacrifices, baptism, ordination, the Mass. These are all designated by one term because they have one thing in common: they can be considered under one aspect as independent of the moral dispositions of the agent. None

(36) - Filthaut, op. cit., p. 163, where he also summarizes the use in the following manner: 'Inhaltlich bezeichnet das opus operans bei allen Autoren die Handlung, d.h. die Darbringung des Lammes, das opus operatum dagegen den zu opfernden Gegenstand, d.h., das Fleisch des Lammes.' - The application of this distinction to the Mass was already made by INNOCENT III (d. 1216), De Sanctissimo altaris mysterio, lib. 3, c. 5 (PL 217 843): 'Quamvis opus operans aliquando sit immundum, semper tamen opus operatum est mundum'.

of them is an opus operans - the term opus operatum has this negative sense. Any other factor that may enter into the connotation of one or other of them - for example, production of a further effect - is left out of consideration as far as this distinction goes. To speak of baptism or any other sacrament justifying ex opere operato is a later development. The early Scholastics had this idea; but they spoke rather of justification ex vi sua.

Since the basic form of the distinction is between two aspects of a single action - crucifixion as active and as passive - the phrase opus operantis is quite foreign to these theologians. The form of the distinction they used they knew already in similar phrases admitted into theology: peccatum peccans (37), voluntas volens, voluntas volita (used by Stephen Langton), gratia gratis dans, gratia gratis data (38).

(37) - Cf. Cod. Brit. Mus. Harley lat. 3855, fol. 14; see following note.

(38) - Cf. Landgraf, Dogmengeschichte, III/1, p. 158.

Use by St Thomas's immediate predecessors and contemporaries.

The influence on St Thomas of the first Dominican masters at Paris, Roland of Cremona and Hugh of St Cher, both of whom have the terminology in their commentaries, may be considered sure. To give a more complete account of the usage among others who might have influenced him, the work of Alexander of Hales, St Albert the Great, and St Bonaventure must be studied. An examination of the passages in these authors parallel to those in which St Thomas uses the terminology has surprisingly negative results.

Alexander of Hales (d. 1245), in his unfinished Summa theologica, treats of only one of the problems raised by St Thomas, but it is the key question of the passion of Christ (39). He does not use the terminology, but speaks simply of the crucifixion 'as it is the effect of the action of Judas and the Jews.'

In St Albert's Commentary on the Sentences (Bk. 3, written 1246; Bk. 4, 1249), which must be considered of

(39) - ALEXANDER OF HALES, Summa theologica, lib. 3, inq. un., tr. 5, q. 1, M. 6, c. 2 (Ed. Quaracchi, 1948, t. 4, p. 225).

particular importance because of its author's relation to St Thomas, the terms appear in the crucifixion discussion and à propos of the sacraments. The first of these places adheres to the traditional distinction (40); so, too, does the judgment on the efficacy of the sacraments of the Old Law (41). In the article on the definition of a sacrament, however, the forms ex opere operante, ex opere operato appear, distinguishing virtue from sacrament; 'A good life achieves salvation ex opere operante, and not ex opere operato; a sacrament, on the contrary, ex opere operato. Whence it is clear that a good life is not a sacrament' (42). Here St Albert has brought together the opus operatum and ex vi sua

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- (40) - ST ALBERT, In III Sent., d. 20, C, a.12 (Opera omnia, Vivès, vol. 28, p. 370) : 'Distinguendum est quod est opus operans quod est operatio ipsa, actio scil. prout est ab agente, et in ipso ut in subjecto; et est operatum, scil. res constituta et effecta per operationem et actionem.'
- (41) - ST ALBERT, In IV Sent., d.1, B, a.8, sol.3, ad 1 (vol. 29, p. 21): 'Opus operans ... et hoc poterat informari charitate ... opus operatum ut hircus immolatus et hoc nihil contulit quod intus adjuvaret supra meritum actus.' Cf. ib., ad 3 (p. 22); a. 9, Sed contra (p. 23); d. 4, B, a.2, sol. 3 (p. 83).
- (42) - ST ALBERT, In IV Sent., d.1, B, a.5, ad diff. 1, ad 3 (vol. 29, p.16): 'Bona vita ex opere operante operatur salutem, et non ex opere operato; sacramentum autem ex opere operato; et sic patet quod bona vita non est sacramentum.'

of the pseudo-Poitiers Gloss and in doing so has given a new dimension to the first of these phrases. Originally it signified simply an action or effect as independent of the agent. Now the idea of causality has been joined to it. The result of the marriage is causality which is contrasted with the causality proper to merit. It may reasonably be assumed that when St Thomas appeals to the usage of theologians to justify his employment of this terminology, he is thinking in the first place of his teacher, particularly when he uses the forms that that teacher either introduced or was, at least, one of the first to use. St Albert does not use the terminology in many of the places where St Thomas has it (43).

St Bonaventure who commented on the Sentences a short time before St Thomas (1250-1252) uses the terminology only sparingly; notably in the crucifixion question and in general application to the sacraments, both of the Old and the New Law (44). He does not use ex opere operato nor ex opere

(43) - Cf. ST ALBERT, In IV Sent., d.1, E, a.15 (vol. 29, p. 29); d.1, G; d. 2, F, a.7 (p. 53); d.13, H, a.31 (p. 391); etc.

(44) - ST BONAVENTURE, In III Sent., d.20, dub.4 (Ed. Quaracchi, t.3, p.433): (crucifixion); In IV Sent., d.1, p. 1, a. un., q. 5 (t.4, p. 26): 'Constat quod opus operans non est sacramentum sed opus operatum ... Sunt etiam qui dicunt ... quod [sacramenta NL] justificant ratione

operante. In his parallels to the majority of places where St Thomas uses the terminology, St Bonaventure does not use it (45). It occurs, however, in the discussion of the question whether divine power can produce an effect which is actually infinite. The action (opus) is proportionate to the potency, argues the objector; but St Bonaventure distinguishes ~~opus operans and~~ opus operans and opus operatum (thus, the act of creation and the creature). The former is proportionate to the power; the latter is so only in univocal causality (therefore, not in creation) (46). Again, in a context in which it is used by the pseudo-Poitiers Gloss, the terminology appears in the question whether God is responsible even for the action which is sinful. An objector says not, since from a good will only good can come. St Bonaventure agrees as far as opus operans goes 'since this is the act of the will itself'; but he will not admit it for the opus

./ - operis operati, sed sacramenta VL ratione operis operantis, non operati; et opus operans est fides, sed operatum exterius est sacramentum.' - The early Scholastics preferred: 'if the opus operans is from charity it is justified, etc.'

(45) - Cf. ST BONAVENTURE, In IV Sent., d.1., p.2, a.1, q.1 (p.32); ib., a. 2, q. 3 (p. 42); d.4, p.2, a.1, q.3 (p.110); d.5, a.2, q. 1 (p. 125); etc.

(46) - ST BONAVENTURE, In I Sent., d. 43, a. un., q. 3, ad 1 (t. 1, p. 772).

operatum, for this, he says, need not be good in every aspect - it need not be meritorious - but may have only the goodness of a nature (47). These places serve only to make still more clear the purely moral significance of the terminology. It does not appear that St Bonaventure had any special influence on St Thomas in this matter. He is represented as one of the aliqui who use the terminology. Neither St Bonaventure nor St Albert ever uses the form opus operantis.

The terminology had therefore been increasingly common currency among theologians for almost a hundred years by the time St Thomas undertook the task of explaining the Sentences. An essentially simple distinction, it had been shown that it was applicable to any human, and even divine, action. Its particular usefulness had been seen where ^{there} was need for clarifying situations in which an individual's action took on values independently of the individual. The Scholastics passed it from one to another as a key to one of the agitated questions of the day: was Peter Lombard to be followed in his opinion on the value of the sacraments of the

(47) - ST BONAVENTURE, In II Sent., d. 37, a. 1, q. 1, ad 2 (t.2, p. 863).

Old Law ? Most of them do not seem to have felt - if the idea even occurred to them - that any useful purpose was to be served by applying the distinction to the New-Law sacraments. With the growing consciousness of the distinction between perfect sacraments and sacramentals, it had come to be generally admitted that the former justified ex vi sua. This being so, there was no immediate problem to be solved by a distinction which was introduced in order to show that sacraments which did not justify ex vi sua had nevertheless the value of any meritorious action. Only Peter of Poitiers and the anonymous Summa of the Porretana school (Cod. Bamberg, Patr. 136) appear to have realized that there were other problems to be solved by it, relating to the minister of the sacraments.

Because of the limited application they made of the distinction, the early Scholastics were content with its basic form, opus operans, opus operatum. It was not until St Albert's time - and not improbably by Albert himself - that, with the coming of a greater awareness of the possibilities of the distinction, the two ideas, 'opus operatum' and 'justifying ex vi sua' were combined in one

form, 'justifying ex opere operato'. The sense remained the same, namely, that the New-Law sacraments give grace independently of the merit (opus operans) of both the minister and the subject. There was no suggestion of its being independent of any other acts.

St Thomas at once saw wide possibilities for the application of the distinction taught him by St Albert. Curiously, however, his use of it is confined, practically speaking, to the Commentary on the Sentences. It is important for the purposes of this study to determine in detail what he understood by it, what changes he made in his use of it as compared with the usage of his predecessors, and to decide why he dispensed with it in the Summa.

Opus operans in St Thomas's Commentary on the Sentences

Theological manuals commonly contrast opus operatum and opus operantis. This terminology is all but unknown to St Thomas. Only once does it occur in the Fourth Book of the Sentences. In some fifteen or sixteen other places where the distinction is made, for St Thomas, as for the early Scholastics and for his contemporaries, the second member

is always opus operans (48). It has already been pointed out that this choice of words indicates the original sense of the distinction. The action, opus, is considered first actively, as proceeding from the agent - operans - then passively, as independent, morally, of the agent - operatum. Though by the middle of the thirteenth century some freedom was taken in applying the distinction to more complex situations, the formal idea of the opus operatum as something independent of the moral dispositions of the agent was undisputed.

St Thomas in the Sentences uses opus operans of non-sacramental actions and of actions performed in the administration and reception of the sacraments.

i) Non-sacramental actions. Like his predecessors, St Thomas solves the problem concerning the crucifixion by

(48) - The exception is In IV Sent., d. 45, q. 2, a. 1, sol.3: 'Nostra sacramenta ex seipsis efficaciam habent absque opere operantis, quam aequaliter explent per quoscunque fiant.' The temptation to attribute the form to the error of a copyist is great. The weight of probability is against its authenticity. No completely critical edition of the Fourth Bk. of the Sentences is available. The Leonine edition of the Summa gives the same form in the corresponding place of the Supplement (q. 71, a. 3).

distinguishing between the object, and the moral imputability, of the action of the Jews (49). The latter he terms opus operans, that is, the death of Christ precisely as brought about by the Jews for their own evil ends.

Opus operans is again used of the giving of alms to obtain suffrages after death, while the relief of the poor thus procured is an opus operatum. Further, the prayers obtained in this way are at the same time opus operatum as far as the alms-giver is concerned and opus operans of the recipient (50). Here again opus operans connotes simply the moral imputability of the action to the agent (51).

Among texts which refer to non-sacramental actions may be included one which speaks of the Old-Law sacramental ceremonies, since the complications connected with the sacraments of the Church are not found in them. It appears

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- (49) - In III Sent., d. 20, a.5, sol. 2, ad 3 (p. 627 n. 97):
'Opus operans Judaeorum est malum simpliciter; sed passio quae est opus operatum est quidem simpliciter bona, secundum quod est in patiente; quamvis possit dici mala secundum quod est in actione illorum sicut in causa ...'
- (50) - In IV Sent., d. 45, q. 2, a. 2, sol. 2, ad 4 (quoted in n. 70, below).
- (51) - Ib., 'Opus operans potest accipi vel ex parte principalis agentis vel ex parte exequentis.'

absurd, says St Thomas, that Peter Lombard should deny that the use of those Old-Law sacraments, that is, 'the opus operans as some theologians call it', was meritorious. Like any other act of virtue such use must be pleasing to God and therefore deserving of reward (52). In this case opus operans is used independently of opus operatum; the sense remains the same (53). This is St Thomas's solution to the problem that divided the commentators on the Sentences, the discussion of which served to popularize the terminology.

It is to be concluded that in all these cases St Thomas uses opus operans to indicate that he is referring to an action precisely as proceeding from an agent and thus as morally imputable to him as to an independent cause. This is the sense universally acknowledged by his predecessors.

(52) - In IV Sent., d. 1, q. 1, a. 5, sol. 2 (p. 42, n.193) f.): 'De usu sacramentorum qui opus operans a quibusdam dicitur, est etiam duplex opinio ... Sed hoc videtur absurdum quod labores sanctorum patrum in hujusmodi sacramentis Deo accepti non fuerint et quod opus virtutis possit esse non meritorium'.

(53) - So also, In IV Sent., d. 4, q. 3, a. 3, q1a. 3, obj.1 (p. 191, n. 249) with ad 1 (p. 194, n. 267); ib., q1a. 4, obj. 1 (p. 191, n. 252) and sol. 4 (pp. 194, 195, n. 271); in both of which places St Thomas denies that baptism has efficacy merely ex opere operante, from charity.

11) Sacramental actions. When applied by St Thomas to the sacraments of the Church, the term opus operans retains its normal signification. This is important to notice because later theologians have used the term (under the form opus operantis) to refer explicitly to the dispositions required in the subject for receiving the effect of the opus operatum (54). The text of St Thomas nowhere equiparates opus operans and dispositions in this fashion; the two terms are used in different contexts. Though it may be argued that the same reality is denoted by both terms and that, therefore, modern usage represents a legitimate development of St Thomas's terminology, it is a matter for question whether the basic idea of opus operans as personal use of the sacraments, differing in no way from normal meritorious activity, has been retained by all modern theologians.

A straightforward application of the terminology where its moral significance is unobscured is to be found in those places where St Thomas uses it to distinguish the effects

(54) - Cf. A. MICHEL, art. Opus operatum, opus operantis, DTC XI (1931), col. 1084; D. PRUEMMER, Manuale theologiae moralis, t. III, p. 29 (ed. 11, 1953) : 'Dictio "operis operantis" significat merita et dispositiones sive ministri sive suscipientis sacramentum'.

which may be attributed to the minister as an individual and those which belong to the sacrament alone. The Mass, he says, in so far as it is an opus operatum, is equally efficacious, no matter who the celebrant may be; but to this sacramental efficacy there may be added another, secondary effect, namely, that which is due to the virtuous activity of the priest as an individual; and this secondary efficacy is thus ex opere operante (55); that is to say, the effect may be attributed to the opus operans, the meritorious activity of the priest. Likewise, baptism gives grace ex opere operato, but to this may be added another effect 'pertaining to the well-being of either the body or the soul' of the subject, due to the merits of the minister (56). Finally, the minister may cooperate in the giving of grace either ex opere operato, by

(55) - In IV Sent., d. 13, q. 1, a. 1, sol. 5 (p. 550, n. 47):
 'De Missa possumus loqui dupliciter: aut quantum ad id quod est essenziale in ea, scil. corpus Christi. Et sic a quocumque dicatur, aequaliter bona est, quia opus operatum aequaliter bonum est et virtuosum. Vel quantum ad id quod est connexum sacramento et quasi secundarium. Et sic Missa boni sacerdotis melior est, quia non solum habet efficaciam ex opere operato, sed ex opere operante ...'

(56) - In IV Sent., d. 5, q. 2, a. 2, q1a. 3, obj. 1 (p. 216) with sol. 3 (pp. 218, 219).

administering the sacraments, or ex opere operante, 'by teaching or by meritorious works' (57).

Elsewhere St Thomas defines opus operans as 'use of a sacrament' (58). Here he refers explicitly to the usage of theologians in their discussion of Peter Lombard's opinion on the value of the Old-Testament sacraments (59). He states the distinction as applicable to all sacraments.

In only one place does St Thomas use ex opere operante of an effect to be attributed to the subject of a sacrament (60); but this presents no exception to his usage. The purpose of the article is to decide what good works may be applied to the dead as suffrages. To the objection that

(57) - In IV Sent., d. 5, q. 1, a. 2 (p. 204, n. 28).

(58) - In IV Sent., d. 1, q. 1, a. 5, sol. 1 (p. 41, n. 181):
'In sacramentis est duo considerari: scil. ipsum sacramentum, et usum sacramenti. Ipsum sacramentum dicitur a quibusdam opus operatum; usus autem sacramenti est ipsa operatio quae a quibusdam opus operans dicitur'.

(59) - Cp. ib. sol. 2 (p. 42, n. 193); quoted above, n. 52.

(60) - In IV Sent., d. 45, q. 2, a. 3, sol. 1, ad 3 :
'... baptismus non habet efficaciam nisi in eo qui baptizatur, quantum est ex opere operato, quamvis ex opere operante vel baptizantis vel baptizati possint aliis prodesse sicut et caetera opera meritoria.'

baptism and the other sacraments, on account of their extraordinary effects, should be of considerable advantage to the dead, the reply is made that baptism produces its effect only in the recipient. Nevertheless, since the worthy administration or reception of baptism are acts of virtue like any other, they are meritorious and their merits may be applied to the dead. The benefit thus gained for the dead is ex opere operante. There is no question here of the causality of the sacrament or of dispositions for it. As always opus operans refers an action to a morally responsible agent; no more.

One reply might appear at first sight to use the phrase in direct reference to the dispositions of the subject (61). That St Thomas does not, in fact, make this explicit application is made clear by reference to the objection which is being answered. According to this an action performed in mortal sin can never revive; therefore baptism, unworthily

(61) - In IV Sent., d. 4, q. 3, a. 2, sol. 3, ad 1 (p. 189, n. 240): 'Baptismus non habet efficaciam solum ex opere operante sed magis ex opere operato quod est opus Dei, et non hominis; et ideo non potest esse mortuum.'

received, cannot revive. St Thomas's reply is that baptism must not be thought of as an ordinary action for whose value the agent alone is ~~alone is~~ responsible; its efficacy is not of the kind that is ex opere operante. It is rather an action that has efficacy ex opere operato and, in fact, an action of God. It is evident that this is an example of the normal use of opus operans.

The extreme flexibility of the notion opus operans is apparent from all these extracts. It is equally applicable to sacramental and non-sacramental activity, to the activity of both minister and subject, whether of the Old or the New Law sacraments. This is only to be explained by the fact that it carries no specific sacramental connotation. It implies nothing more, and nothing less, when used in a sacramental context than it does when it is used of any act of virtue or vice. The activity which it refers to here may be called 'sacramental' in so far as its material is the rite of baptism or confirmation, or any other. Formally, however, it is not to be distinguished from other acts of virtue. The later connotation of opus operans as conditions for validity or fruitfulness of the sacraments is thus not acknowledged by St Thomas. Neither is it excluded; but, in

fact, when St Thomas wants to speak of the acts required of the subject for the sacrament to be valid or fruitful, he does so in so many words (62). If these two notions are to be combined, as modern theology demands, it should not be at the expense of either.

Opus operatum in the Commentary on the Sentences

St Thomas's use of opus operans is the key to his basic understanding of opus operatum since the latter implies essentially nothing more than a negation of the former. In its original, purely moral, context the contrast signified by the two terms was that between an action considered as proceeding morally from the agent, and the same action considered as independent of the agent. The Passion as perpetrated by the Jews was evil, but independently of them it served as the material of Christ's sacrifice. This usage

(62) - Cf. In IV Sent., d. 2, q. 2, a. 4, sol. un. (p.101, n. 128); ib., d. 4, q. 2, a. 2, q1a. 2, obj, 1 (p.171, n. 134); ib., d. 1, q. 2, a. 4, sol. 2 (p. 58, n.276); in all of which opus operatum is related to dispositions on the part of the subject. See below. Cf. also In IV Sent., d. 4, q. 3, aa. 1 and 2 (pp. 180 f.); ib., d. 6, q. 1, a. 2, sol. 2 (p. 238); ib., sol. 3 (pp. 238, 239); etc.; places where opus operatum is not explicitly mentioned.

lies at the base of St Thomas's application of opus operatum to the sacraments. The term remains primarily a convenient formula for signifying an action as independent, morally, of a particular agent. It does not contain in itself any reference to the intervention of some other agent. The formula abstracts from this. Consequently, the form ex opere operato indicates that the opus operatum produces an effect for which the agent of the opus operans is not responsible.

Later theologians have sometimes maintained that opus operatum, when used in a sacramental context, signifies formally a mysterious operation of Christ: opus scilicet Christi; and this assertion may gain some support from one particular text of St Thomas, where is added: quod est opus Dei. It will be seen, however, from an examination of the body of texts in which the phrase appears that this is a wholly unique occurrence and that it indicates a possible and theologically suggestive secondary meaning to be attached to opus operatum. It is not the primary, formal meaning; and to say that it is, is to ignore the historical and philological origins of the phrase as well as to

misinterpret the majority of texts in which St Thomas uses it.

i) Non-sacramental actions. A valuable indication of what he understands by opus operatum is given by St Thomas in In III Sent., d. 18, a. 1. As a preliminary to discussing the merit of Christ, he seeks in this article to establish that the God-man could perform human, as well as divine, actions. This St Thomas does by assigning the two natures of Christ as diverse principles of action. This solution to a centuries-old problem has to be reconciled with both the facts of the Gospel and the solutions proposed by the Fathers. His miracles are clear evidence of divine action in Christ; yet they were performed in human fashion: the leper of Matt., 8:3 was ⁿcleas~~e~~d by a touch. Pseudo-Denis spoke of theandric action, theandrikē energeia (63); and the first objection in St Thomas's article claims that this signifies only one action in Christ.

St Thomas interprets pseudo-Denis in the light of Bk.3, ch. 19 of St John Damascene's De fide orthodoxa (64). He

(63)- PSEUDO-DENIS, Ep. 4, Ad Caium (PG 3 1072 C).

(64) - In III Sent., d. 18, a. 1, ad 1 (p. 556, n. 17). All three points of this reply are taken from Damascene; cf. I. BASKES, Die Christologie des hl. Th. von Aq. und die griechischen Kirchenväter, Paderborn, 1931, pp. 108, 109.

introduces a word from ch. 15 which he glosses with the phrase, opus operatum. This reply affords material for speculation about what influence ch. 15 of Damascene had on St Thomas's wide application of the phrase in the Sentences. This point is dealt with in an appendix to this chapter.

The reply goes :

'The actions of two natures may be unified in three ways ... Secondly, in so far as they produce one effect which is known as opus operatum, or apotelesma as Damascene calls it; for example, the cleansing of the leper' (65).

In ch. 15 of De fide orthodoxa, from which apotelesma is taken, Damascene is concerned, as is St Thomas in the present article, with 'the actions which are in our Lord, Jesus Christ' (66). As a preliminary to his discussion he defines four senses of energeia (rendered by St Thomas, in this reply, as actio, action) : 1. thought, the primary act of the mind; 2. the expression of thought, which implies a relation of speech to thought; 3. the relation of an agent to his effect; 4. 'the thing itself which is done' (67). A few lines later

(65) - In III Sent., loc. cit.; 'Actionem Christi dicit Dionysius "deivirilem" ... quia actiones duarum naturarum quantum ad tria ununtur ... Secundo quantum ad unum effectum qui dicitur opus operatum, vel apotelesma secundum Damascenum, sicut mundatio leprosi'.

(66) - ST JOHN DAMASCENE, De fide orthodoxa, 3, 15 (PG 94 1045 f.). Burgundio's translation, the one used by St Thomas (see below, n.117), uses apotelesma throughout.

(67) - cf. ib. (PG 94 1049 A): '...kai auto to apoteleumenon energeia legetai'.

he refers to the last of these as 'the effect itself, apotelesma'. Developing the traditional analogy of the hypostatic union with the union of soul and body, he states the relation between 'the effect in itself', on one side, and soul and body respectively, on the other:

repleveris ?
 'The effect (apotelesma) as related to the body is touching, or taking into one's hands, and as it were the mass of what is produced; as related to the soul it is as it were the shaping and in-forming of what is produced' (68).

It is clear that apotelesma was for Damascene a convenient expression equivalent here to 'what Christ did', the miracle simply as something that happened, leaving out of consideration the complicated problems of relating Christ's two natures and operations to the effect and to each other. St Thomas proposes opus operatum as a Latin equivalent, so that this phrase may be called a common-sense term. The leper was cleansed - this is the opus operatum.

The reply to the fifth objection of this article (69)

(68) - Cf. ib. (BG 94 1049 A): 'To de apotelesma, tou men sōmatos, he aphē, kai he kratesis, kai he tou poioumenou oionei perienexis; tō de psychēs, hē tou gōumenou oionei morphōsis kai skēmatismos.' X

(69) - In III Sent., d. 18, a. 1, ad 5 (p. 557, n. 21 f.).

sch / ? δ X " ?
 not δ K " .

is precisely a plea to perfect this common-sense notion of Christ's activity. The fact that we can see only one result does not mean that several actions, or principles of action, have not cooperated in producing it; and, in fact, four possibilities can be envisaged in which the same result, idem actum, is caused by diverse actions. These are 1. when several people combine to do something; 2. when a thing may be produced only after repeated actions, for example, an acquired habit; 3. when an effect comprises more than one form and is one only by reason of its subject; 4. when two actions belong to distinct principles of action, one of which uses the other as an instrument.

The broad application of the phrase opus operatum is evident from these replies. It is used of what Christ does, whether this be the result of his divine and human action separately applied (this appears to be the sense of the third possibility), or of the instrumental use of his human action by his divinity (4, above). It is to be concluded that St Thomas uses the phrase here in preference to the more simple 'effect' because there is question of two actions bearing on the same 'thing done' and because he wants to abstract from the relations the thing bears to particular actions. The

force of the word operatum is to exclude from the connotation of opus the sense of 'action' and to restrict it to that of 'effect'. This is the distinction made by St John Damascene between the third and fourth sense of energeia.

It is worth while noticing that St Thomas appears to be the only thirteenth-century theologian to introduce a discussion of this nature into the exposition of the eighteenth distinction of the Third Book of the Sentences. The use of opus operatum to signify 'effect' was, however, known to some of the early Scholastics.

Other occurrences of opus operatum in a non-sacramental sense. It has already been noted that one of the first applications of the terminology by the early Scholastics outside discussions on the crucifixion was to the relief of the poor obtained by alms-giving and to the prayer said for the donor's intentions by the recipient of alms (70). Here

(70) - In IV Sent., d. 45, q. 2, a. 2, sol. 2, ad 4 (cp. Suppl., a. 71, a. 6, ad 4): " ... Suffragia ex duobus valent, scilicet, ex opere operante, et ex opere operato. Et dico opus operatum non solum ecclesiae sacramentum, sed effectum accidentem ex operatione: sicut ex collatione eleemosynarum consequitur pauperum relevatio, et eorum oratio pro defuncto ad Deum. Similiter opus operans potest accipi vel ex parte principalis agentis, vel ex parte

there are no external complications to obscure the purely moral character of the term. The dyingman obtains at once the reward for his personal act of virtue; but he must await the performance of the suffrages to profit by them since their effect is independent of him; it is ex opere operato. The fact that this last phrase of itself bears no reference to the intervention of another agent is proved by the words which follow; for when St Thomas does want to connect the ex-opere-operato effect with its cause he adds that it is at the same time ex opere operante as far as its immediate agent is concerned.

Still in a non-sacramental sense St Thomas uses the phrase ex opere operato of the effect of the faith of the parents of children who were cleansed from original sin before the institution of circumcision. In an illuminating text (71) he likens the operation of this faith to the

./ - exequentis ... quantum ad efficaciam suffragiorum quae est ex opere operato, vel ex opere operante exequentis ...'

(71) - In IV Sent., d. 1, q. 2, a. 6, sol. 1, ad 2 (p. 70 n. 333): 'Fides aliena non juvabat inquantum erat actus personae, sed ex parte illa quae respiciebat objectum suum quod erat medicina totius naturae; in quo habebat quandam similitudinem cum sacramentis

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action of New-Law sacraments:

'The faith of the parents helped the child, not in so far as it was a personal act, but because of its relation to its object which was the healing given to the whole of nature; and in this respect it had analogy with our sacraments, in so far as it justified by its object, that is ex opere operato, and not ex opere operante'.

This reply must be read with care; and what is essential in it must be distinguished from what is merely circumstantial. The formal point that St Thomas makes in it is indicated in the difficulty to which he is replying. It is objected that it would have been inequitable to make the salvation of a child depend on the moral dispositions of his parents. St Thomas replies that the act of faith which the parents made justified the child, not because of the dispositions of the parents, but because of the intrinsic nature of the act itself. In other words, he says, the act of faith justified ex opere operato, not ex opere operante.

./ - nostris, inquantum justificabat ex objecto, quasi ex opere operato, non autem ex opere operante." Note that St Thomas does not say: "... inquantum respiciebat objectum ...", but "... ex parte illa qua ...", suggesting even in this that he is thinking of the act of faith not formally as specified by its object, but simply as an entity drawing its value from other than the person who makes it.

This juridical distinction is sufficient to satisfy the objection, and thus forms the conclusion to the reply; but to justify making such a distinction St Thomas is obliged to explain the nature of the act of faith and its object. This does not mean that he is redefining ex opere operato, a phrase that he has used in several comparable places and always with the same meaning. The particular circumstances that justify the use of the phrase here are not to be transferred to the essential connotation of the phrase itself. It is therefore incorrect to say that here St Thomas understands by ex opere operato 'drawing its efficacy from the redemptive mysteries of Christ' (72). He understands nothing more specific than 'drawing its efficacy from some source other than the parent.'

No matter what may be the particular object to which St Thomas applies the term - to the miracles of Christ, the

(72) - This is the position adopted by H. SCHILLEBEECKX, O.P., De Sacramentele heilseconomie, Antwerp, 1952, p. 644. This author also makes the unexpected assertion that in this reply St Thomas is speaking of circumcision! This is surely a slip of the pen. Qla. 1 is introduced: 'Videtur quod ante circumcisionem non valebat ad remissionem originalis peccati pro parvulis sola fides'.

crucifixion, the act of faith of parents, relief of the poor, prayers said for the alms-giver - he is always singling out the same aspect: the opus operatum is always the thing done, the artefact, the effect of the action, even the action itself, abstracting from the agent and in particular from his moral dispositions. If this 'thing done' should be in its turn responsible for the production of some further effect, this second effect is said to be ex opere operato. This phrase evidently does not give any information as to what agent is applying the opus operatum to the second effect, nor, even more clearly, as to what dispositions are required in the subject who receives this second effect.

ii) Sacramental use. When St Thomas speaks of the opus operatum of the sacraments he is merely applying, in the first instance, a familiar concept to yet another particular case. He is not introducing a special phrase to cover the wholly unique and mysterious reality of the sacraments. In this new context, however, new nuances are sometimes to be detected in his use of ex opere operato. It is of importance therefore to determine in what circumstances the phrase is used in its original sense, and in what circumstances this sense is modified by its application to the specific form of

causality of certain sacraments.

It is clear that opus operans, opus operatum appear in their original sense in those texts where St Thomas distinguishes between the strictly sacramental, and the personal, activity of the minister. The opus operatum achieves its effect independently of the moral dispositions of the minister. This is so in the Mass where, however, a virtuous celebrant adds to the sacramental efficacy a secondary efficacy ex opere operante (73). Similarly, discussing the question whether sacraments administered by sinful ministers can give grace, St Thomas notes that the efficacy of sacraments is unlike that of prayer. The effect of prayer depends on the person who prays; that is to say, it is ex opere operante. The effect of sacraments, on the other hand, does not depend on the minister; that is to say, it is ex opere operato (74). Certain objections are based on this principle and in each case St Thomas accepts

(73) - In IV Sent., d. 13, q. 1, a. 1, sol. 5 (p. 550, n.47; quoted above, note 7).

(74) - In IV Sent., d. 5, q. 2, a. 2, sol. 2, ad 2 (p. 218, n. 111) : 'In operatione orans est sicut principale agens non solum sicut instrumentale. Et ideo requiritur ad efficaciam orationis quod ex opere operante effectum sortiatur, non solum ex opere operato, sicut est in sacramentis.'

the premise in his replies (75).

It is when the effect of the sacrament on the subject is being discussed that some confusion can arise about St Thomas's meaning since he undoubtedly permitted a certain development in his use of ex opere operato. In the first place, since he is dealing primarily with the effect of the sacrament and no longer with the relation of the sacrament to the minister, the original connotation of opus operatum (namely, independence of the minister) recedes into the background and the action itself, the sacrament, which it denotes dominates the stage. This is, of course, a legitimate development of vocabulary and is, in fact, implicit in every use of the phrase ex opere operato. It is clear that according to this usage opus operatum is a synonym for 'sacrament' (76). So broad is St Thomas's understanding of the phrase that he speaks of the opus operatum in the Old-Law sacraments where there is no question of anything more than bare ceremonial (77).

(75) - In IV Sent., d. 5, q. 2, a. 2, q1a. 3, obj.1 (p.216, n. 95); ib., d. 4, q. 3, a. 3, q1a. 3, obj.1 (p.191, n. 249); ib., d. 13, q. 1, a. 3, q1a. 3, obj. 3, (p. 560, n. 106); d. 5, q. 2, a. 2, q1a. 3, obj. 2.

(76) - In IV Sent., d. 1, q. 1, a. 5, sol. 1 (p. 41, n.181): 'Ipsum sacramentum dicitur a quibusdam opus operatum.'

(77) - Ib. (p. 41, n. 185): '... nullo modo sacramenta ipsa veteris legis, idest opus operatum in eis, gratiam conferebant, excepta circumcisione ...'

A second development - and one more significant for a study of the validity of the term - is that of the form ex opere operato which in certain places is used to signify causality which is independent of the dispositions of the subject. This is obviously going considerably beyond the original idea of the opus operatum being responsible for a further effect, and it is essential that it be made clear in what very special circumstances St Thomas used the phrase in this extended sense. It would be a grave misunderstanding of his text to read it into every occurrence of ex opere operato.

For the sake of clarity, before studying the texts, two facts are to be recalled about the original meaning of these phrases.

The first is that for St Thomas in the Sentences the opus operans of the subject is formally non-sacramental activity and, consequently, texts where it occurs are not to be interpreted as referring to dispositions required in the subject for receiving the effect of the opus operatum.

Secondly it is to be remembered that the term opus operatum essentially connotes independence of the minister and makes no reference to the subject; and that, as a

consequence, phrases like 'gives grace ex opere operato' are to be interpreted as making no reference to the subject unless, in a particular context, some special reason indicates the contrary. The basic meaning of such phrases is that the sacrament, once it has been performed (this is the opus operatum), of its nature, per se, gives grace (78). The necessity and quality of the dispositions required in the subject are determined by the nature of the efficacy itself; in other words, by the particular purpose of the individual sacraments. The formula ex opere operato, in its generic sense, abstracts from all this.

With the first of these facts in mind it is easy to understand why St Thomas excludes merit on the part of the subject in respect of the opus operatum, since merit is for St Thomas opus operans. He admits an objection that the opus operatum, and consequently the effect, of baptism are independent of the subject's merit (79). It is with the

(78) - In IV Sent., d. 1, q. 1, a. 5, sol. 1 (p. 41, n.181):
'Cum ergo dicitur sacramentum, per se loquendo, gratiam conferre vel non conferre, justificare vel non justificare, referendum est ad opus operatum'.

(79) - In IV Sent., d. 4, q. 2, a. 2, q1a. 2, obj. 1 (p.171, n. 134) : 'In baptismo non operatur meritum baptizati,

same distinction between opus operatum and opus operans in mind that St Thomas decides that baptism is sacramentally of profit only to the subject, though it may help others when its reception is an act of virtue (80). In short, it is the characteristic of giving grace ex opere operato in this sense that provides a definition of the sacraments

./ - quantum ad opus operatum.' Note that this is an objection. In the reply (p. 174, n. 154) St Thomas agrees: '... in baptismo ... non operetur meritum baptizati ...'. SCHILLEBEECKX, op. cit., p. 642, in his anxiety to draw the activity of the subject into the sacrament, interprets this objection as teaching that it is only the constitution of the sacrament as a valid sign that is independent of the 'subjectieve, religieuze inzet' of the subject. However, the context makes it clear that here it is question of the res of the sacrament, not merely of the sacramentum tantum. The whole of q. 2 is concerned with grace, the res of baptism; q. 2 of a. 2 inquires whether the virtues are increased in adults who receive baptism. The objection itself is based on the necessity of merit for increase in charity. Sol. 2 and the reply admit the force of the objection but appeal to the supreme efficacy of the merits of Christ. The validity of the sacrament is therefore, as always in St Thomas in such contexts, taken for granted; the whole problem is fruitfulness. It does not follow from this interpretation, as S. seems to think it would, that the subject has no activity in respect of receiving the res. This is not the problem that is being discussed here. In admitting the objector's point St Thomas is making what is for him the self-evident distinction between opus operatum and opus operans, that is, between two distinct sources of grace: the sacraments and personal merit.

(80) - In IV Sent., d. 45, q. 2, a. 3, sol. 1, ad 3: (cp. ./.

of the Church (81).

It is a more delicate problem to establish in what sense exactly St Thomas contrasts efficacy ex opere operato and the corresponding dispositions of the subject. It is clear, since the phrase ex opere operato is a description of an effect in terms of its cause, that in itself it neither postulates nor excludes dispositions in the subject. It is also clear, and for the same reason, that by the addition or implication of some restrictive term the phrase may be used to signify production of an effect independently of the active cooperation of the subject. St. Thomas takes advantage of this flexibility and in one group of texts uses the phrase in such a way as to exclude preparation by the subject for grace. In other places he retains the generic sense. Examination of the texts concerned shows that this development in vocabulary follows on recognition of the distinctive characteristics of individual sacraments. St Thomas's principle is that it is

././ - Suppl., a. 79, a. 1, ad 3): 'Baptismus est quaedam spiritualis regeneratio: unde sicut per generationem non acquiritur esse nisi generato, ita baptismus non habet efficaciam nisi in eo qui baptizatur, quantum est ex opere operato, quamvis ex opere operante vel baptizantis vel baptizati possit aliis prodesse, sicut et caetera opera meritoria.'

(81) - In IV Sent., d. 8, q. 1, a.1, q.1, Sed contra (p.304, n. 9): 'Omnis actio per ministros Ecclesiae dispensata, in qua ex ipso opere operato gratia confertur, est sacramentum.'

the particular purpose of each sacrament that determines the mode of its efficacy ex opere operato and consequently the dispositions required for receiving its effect.

One application of this principle is negative. St Thomas denies that the opus operatum of the Old-Law sacraments gave grace in any way and thus attributes their whole efficacy to the use the subject made of them (82).

Ex opere operato is used in its generic sacramental sense in a place where St Thomas defines in some detail the relation of the subject, first to the opus operatum itself, as distinct from its effect, then to the effect. The occasion is the explanation of the fact that those who had submitted to the baptism of John had to receive later the baptism of Christ. Here, it is to be observed, the principle is stated as a general one, applicable to all the sacraments (83).

(82) - In IV Sent., d. 1, q. 1, a. 5, sol. 1 and sol. 2 (pp. 41, 42); ib., d. 4, q. 1, a. 4, sol. 1, ad 2 (p. 163, n. 93).

(83) - In IV Sent., d. 2, q. 2, a. 4 (p. 101, n. 128):
'... quia sacramenta novae legis ex ipso opere operato efficaciam habent, ideo videtur quod spes et fides illius qui baptismum suscipit, nihil faciat ad sacramentum, quamvis posset facere ad rem sacramenti impediendam vel promovendam. Unde quantumcumque spem suam aliquis ad Christum referret baptizatus baptismo Joannis baptismum novae legis non consequabatur.' -

Peter Lombard had put forward the suggestion that rebaptism would not have been necessary if John's converts 'did not rest their hope on John's baptism, but turned it upon Christ.' St Thomas does not allow this argument. No matter how much the converts fixed their hope on Christ they would not receive the baptism of the New Law because the faith and hope of the subject cannot in any way alter the nature of a New-Law sacrament, this being determined ex opere operato, that is, by the very ceremony performed (84). On the other hand, the faith and hope of the subject can have some influence on the effect of the sacrament. They can either impede or promote it. In the context this last

./ - 'New-Law sacraments' here includes the baptism of John which, though 'a medium between the sacraments of the Old, and those of the New, Law' (ib., a. 1, sol. 1 (p. 94, n. 92)), 'may be reduced to those of the New' (ib., ad 2 (p. 95, n. 93)).

(84) - The idea that causality ex opere operato necessarily implies that the opus operatum (and hence the ceremony) be fixed by divine ordinance is found also in In IV Sent., d. 2, q. 1, a. 4, sol. 4, ad 2 (p. 92, n. 81): 'Sacramenta illa legis naturae non habebant aliquam efficaciam ex opere operato, sed solum ex fide. Et ideo determinatio eorum ab homine puro habente fidem fieri poterat. Non autem ita est de sacramentis novae legis, quae ex opere operato gratiam conferunt.'

observation may be taken to mean, firstly, that the res of a sacrament may be obtained without reception of the sacrament itself; secondly, that when the sacrament is actually received its effect can be dependent on the dispositions of the subject in the way and degree just indicated.

Here, though in general terms only, the analysis of the relation between opus operatum and subject has been carried a step farther. It is stated explicitly that causality ex opere operato by no means excludes dispositions for grace in the subject. What it does exclude is intervention of the faith or hope of the subject in the constitution of the sacrament itself. This is something which is fixed independently of the subject. In this text St Thomas makes it clear that the opus operatum is the ceremony performed. It is this which constitutes the sacrament and thus determines the effect to be produced (85). Each particular

(85) - It is for this reason that the Eucharist is sacramentally of benefit only to the recipient, Comm. in Ioann., c. 6, lect. 6 (964): 'Nec tamen si laicus sumat hoc sacramentum prodest aliis quantum est ex opere operato, in quantum consideratur ut perceptio'; and conversely that the Mass is of universal profit, In IV Sent., d. 45, q. 2, a. 3, sol. 1, ad 3: 'Eucharistia est signum ecclesiasticae unionis, et ideo ex opere operato eius efficacia in alterum transire potest, quod non contingit de aliis sacramentis.'

sacrament, being assigned its own mode of causality, will per se produce its proper effect. Only some defect on the part of the subject can prevent it; and it is here that faith and hope - the two virtues mentioned in this article - come into play.

In one group of texts St Thomas goes beyond the generic sacramental sense of ex opere operato and uses the phrase in order to exclude cooperation on the part of the subject. The explanation for this innovation is to be found in the problem that he is discussing, namely, justification of children. It is clear that his general theory on the sacraments must undergo modifications in this special case and likewise his vocabulary. We find him declaring that it was necessary that circumcision should be able to remit original sin ex opere operato since a child before the use of reason is quite unable to prepare himself for the reception of grace (86). The specific, exclusive sense given to ex opere operato in

(86) - In IV Sent., d. 1, q. 2, a. 4, sol. 2 (p. 58, n. 276):
 '... Et iterum quia non poterat puer natus, antequam haberet usum liberi arbitrii, se ad gratiam prae preparare, ne omnino, sine remedio relinqueretur, oportuit aliquod remedium dari quod ex ipso opere operato peccatum aboleret; et tale remedium fuit circumcisio.' Similarly, of the Holy Innocents, ib., d. 4, q. 3, a. 3, q1a. 3, obj.1 (p.191, n.249) with ad 1 (p. 194, n. 267).

this text is marked by St Thomas himself by the addition of ipso - ex ipso opere operato. It is again to the necessity of an objective remedy for original sin in children that he appeals to explain why the Old-Testament figure of baptism caused an effect ex opere operato whereas those of the Eucharist did not (87).

It is only in the case when these two elements concur - a sacrament necessary for salvation and a subject incapable of making a human act - that St Thomas uses ex opere operato to indicate that the sacrament causes grace without the cooperation of the subject. This is clearly a derived sense of the phrase. It is not contrary to the original sense, but neither is it the result of a connatural development. The first stage of development is from a term relative to the minister to a term notifying the sacramental action in itself. It is because of the nature of the particular sacramental action which is baptism that a further development makes the term signify independence of the subject's

(87) - In IV Sent., d. 8, q. 1, a. 2, q1a. 2, obj. 5 (p.311, n. 40), ad 5 (p. 315, n. 60).

dispositions. The carefully restricted use that St Thomas makes of the term in its final development is fully justified; but the potential ambiguities of the phrase cannot be denied (88).

The remaining texts where St Thomas uses the term opus operatum are concerned with the agency by which the minister's action is made to produce a supernatural effect. Basically,

(88) - Dr. SCHILLEBEECKX is perhaps a little misleading in his account of St Thomas's use of ex opere operato (op. cit., pp. 641 f.). Assuming that opus operans (opus operantis) means for St Thomas the same as it does for modern authors, namely, dispositions for receiving the effect of the opus operatum, and being unwilling to admit that efficacy ex opere operato excludes cooperation on the part of the subject, he is forced to postulate that St Thomas excludes the opus operans only from the constitution of the external sign, not from the action of grace-giving. Cf. op. cit., p. 645: 'Het "opus operantis" van [minister and subject] staat buiten het sacramentalisme, gezien als constitutie van het signum sacramentale, maar het "opus operantis" van de ontvanger staat geenszins buiten het sacramentalisme, beschouwd naar zijn genadegave.' The reply to In IV Sent., d. 4, q. 2, a. 2, q1a. 2, obj. 1 (p. 171, n. 134; quoted above, n. 79), by denying merit in respect of the res sacramenti, is sufficient to refute such a theory since merit is the primary meaning of opus operans for St Thomas. Besides this, S. has to modify his own conclusion to account for the intention of the subject required for validity. Although S. 's teaching may correspond to that of St Thomas, his terminology is not that of the Sentences, owing to the restricted sense of opus operans in this work.

nothing more is involved here than an application of the term in its original moral sense to the sacraments. The opus operatum is what the minister does; the valid sacramental action as would nowadays be said. In one place, almost casually, St Thomas raises this simple idea onto a new and lofty plane by attributing the opus operatum to God.

In the reply, already examined, in which he admits that the subject cannot merit the grace he receives in baptism, St Thomas goes on to attribute the effect of the opus operatum to the merits of Christ (89).

Further, since it is to the ceremony performed itself that the production of grace is attached, this ceremony cannot be determined merely according to the promptings of the individual's faith, but must be instituted by Christ himself (90).

In another place, in an objection, St Thomas makes the

(89) - In IV Sent., d. 4, q. 2, a. 2, q1a. 2, obj. 1 (p.171, n. 134) and ad 1 (p. 174, n. 154): 'In baptismo quamvis non operatur meritum baptizati, operatur ibi tamen meritum Christi, quod est efficacius.' (Opus operatum occurs in the obj.)

(90) - In IV Sent., d. 2, q. 1, a. 4, sol. 4, ad 2 (p. 92, n. 81; quoted above, n. 84) with sol. 4 (p. 92; n. 79).

usual distinction between the effect of the minister's merit (ex opere operante) and that of the sacrament (ex opere operato) (91). In the solution, leaving aside the formal distinction, he explains the nature of sacramental causality (92). The proper effect of baptism (ex opere operato in the objection) is not to be attributed to the minister because baptism

'cannot be other than an instrumental cause; and it is an instrument, not of the minister (who is himself an instrument, but of Christ and God.'

Denying that works of satisfaction done in sin revive when the soul is restored to grace, St Thomas has to face an objection which argues that the obstacle placed by sin in the way of satisfaction achieving its effect is the same as that place^d in the way of baptism, and that consequently satisfaction should revive equally with baptism. St Thomas

(91) - In IV Sent., d. 5, q. 2, a. 2, q1a. 3, obj. 1 (p. 216, n. 95).

(92) - Ib., sol. 3 (pp. 218, 219, n. 112) : '... cum effectu baptismi potest aliquid aliud baptizato conferri ... ex merito baptizantis. Et hoc non est proprie effectum baptismi, quia baptismus non est causa nisi instrumentalis et non est instrumentum agens in virtute ministri qui et ipse instrumentum est sine [Edit. : sed in] virtute Christi et Dei.'

gives two replies. In the second (93) he denies the parity between baptism and satisfaction, saying that the latter is the work of man, the former of God. Baptism, he explains, 'justifies ex opere operato', something no man can do, but only God. It is clear that the phrase ex opere operato is merely incidental to the appeal to God as the author of justification. The phrase itself refers to the administration of the sacrament as a valid ceremony.

Similar to this reply is another which answers the objection that baptism itself cannot revive since actions performed in sin do not revive (94). St Thomas adopts the same approach as in dist. 15. Baptism must not be thought of, he explains, as an ordinary action which lacks all virtue when not performed in charity. It is something with objective value, independently of the people concerned in its ceremonial.

This St Thomas expresses by the phrase 'efficacy ex opere

operato'. He goes on to say that in the case of baptism this

ex-opere-operato efficacy is from God and not from man. It is

in the expression of thi

(93) - In IV Sent., d. 15, q. 1, a. 3, sol. 3, ad 2 (p. 656, n. 103) (cp. Suppl., q. 14, a. 3, ad 2): 'Baptismus ex ipso opere operato justificat: quod non est hominis sed Dei. Et ideo non eodem modo mortificatur sicut satisfactio quae est opus hominis.'

(94) - In IV Sent., d. 4, q. 3, a. 2, sol. 3, ad 1 (p. 189, n. 240): 'Baptismus non habet efficaciam solum ex opere operante sed magis ex opere operato quod est

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last idea that St Thomas quite unexpectedly gives a new sense to opus operatum by the laconic addition quod est opus Dei. This is the only time he uses the phrase in this way. It appears legitimate to conclude that here he indulges in a slight play upon words - which he is not averse to doing (95) - made all the more attractive in this place because of its theological meaning. It would be quite illogical, on account of this solitary example, to revise the basic notion of opus operatum or to read this newly-hinted sense into other texts of the Sentences. Nevertheless, the way lies open for later theologians to develop a mystical sense of what was originally a moral, not to say legal, term.

The final text to be considered is one of the most interesting as far as the theology of the sacraments is concerned, but presents no new philological difficulty. St Thomas makes a brief assertion and leaves the suggestion undeveloped:

./ . - opus Dei et non hominis; et ideo non potest esse mortuum.'

(95) - Cp.III, q. 68, a. 2 : '... mentaliter ... sacramentaliter ...'.

'The sacraments of the Old Law gave nothing ex opere operato : and therefore those actions did not require any spiritual power (in the minister and subject). Therefore a character was conferred neither by them nor for using them' (96)

It is clear from the whole question in which this response is found that St Thomas understands by 'spiritual power', spiritualis potestas, a right to use the sacraments of the Church, that is to say, the sacramental character. This is, in fact, the assumption of the objector and is stated explicitly in the preceding reply where the purpose of the power is said to be one of making the faithful recognizable so that they may be admitted by other members of the Church to the sacraments (97). Once again it may be seen that opus

(96) - In IV Sent., d. 4, q. 1, a. 4, sol. 1, ad 2 (p. 163, n. 93): 'Sacramenta veteris legis ex opere operato nihil conferebant. Et ideo illae actiones non requirebant aliquam spiritualem potestatem. Et ideo nec ab illis, nec ad illa imprimebatur character.' - It will be recalled that St Thomas speaks of 'the opus operatum in the Old-Law sacraments'; cf. In IV Sent., d. 1, q. 1, a. 5, sol. 1 (p. 41, n. 185; quoted above, n. 77).

(97) - Dr SCHILLEBEECKX understands potestas spiritualis in this reply of the power of Christ communicated to the sacraments and he takes this as the thing formally signified by the term opus operatum. Cf. op. cit., p. 643: 'Omdat de christelijke sacramenten op instrumenteel-ministeriële wijze ons de kracht van Christus' verlossingsmysterie laten toestromen en

operatum designates formally nothing but the sacrament seen as a public ceremony of the Church, which no individual may alter and to which only initiated members of the Church may be admitted. The reasons for these practical details are merely touched upon here.

Later works

A reading of the principal sacramental texts of St

./ - er in hen dus een "virtus spiritualis" aanwezig is, bezitten zij een efficaciteit "ex opere operato". ... Het "ex opere operato" duidt derhalve op het mysterion-karakter van de sacramenten als mysterieviering van de historische Christusmysteriën.' This is not serious textual analysis. Though potestas may not be the word most frequently used by St Thomas to designate the sacramental character, he twice uses it in this sense in close proximity to this reply. Cf. In IV Sent., d. 4, q. 1, a. 3, sol. 5, ad 2 (p. 161, n. 82): 'Character poneret in (Christo) potestatem spiritualement coarctatam'; and ib., a. 4, sol. 1, ad 1 (p. 163, n. 92): 'Actiones spirituales ad quas character ordinat, intra Ecclesiam tantum exercentur. Et ideo pro nihilo potestas ad illas actiones daretur alicui, nisi tali modo quod innotesceret illis qui sunt de Ecclesia, ut eum ad tales actiones admittant.'; ib., sol. 2 (p. 163, n. 96); d. 5, q. 1, a. 2, sol. un., ad 1 (p. 204, n. 29). + S. 's determination to find the synthesis of the Summa in the Sentences betrays his critical sense. He reveals the weakness of his own case when he admits that his idea of opus operatum includes the efficient causality of Christ's mysteries - a notion that he concedes does not appear before the Summa.

Thomas has discovered only two reappearances of ex opere operato, outside the Sentences, one in the Commentary on the Gospel of St John, the other in the Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews (98). Both these are late works, and both are reportationes (99). Their use of the terminology has nothing new. Neither opus operatum nor opus operans reappears, at least in the principal passages.

The absence of the terminology from the Summa theologiae provides a striking contrast to the Sentences where St Thomas makes such wide use of it. Its absence from the intervening works might be reasonably explained by the fact that none of them contains a full treatise on the sacraments; but it is just this that St Thomas undertakes in the Summa. It is

(98) - Cf. Comm. in Ioann., c; 6, lect. 6 (904): 'Nec tamen si laicus sumat hoc sacramentum (Euch.) prodest aliis quantum est ex opere operato, inquantum consideratur ut perceptio.' In ad Heb., c. 3, lect. 3 (188): 'In Veteri Testamento erat tantum auditus, nec conferebatur gratia ex opere operato; sed in Novo Testamento et est auditus fidei et datur gratia ipsi operanti.'

(99) - Cf. R. CAI, O.P., Preface to Marietti ed. of Super Evangelium S Ioannis Lectura, 1952, pp. vi, vii, dating this work, Jan. 1269 - April, 1272; id., Preface to Marietti ed. of Super Epistolas S Pauli Lectura, 1953, pp. vi-ix, dating In ad Heb., conjecturally, after 1269; possibly revised by St Thomas before his death.

undoubtedly true that the terminology could be quite well inserted into the Summa without altering the teaching there; but the fact is that St Thomas studiously avoids doing so. The explanation is to be found, it seems, in St Thomas's interest in the controversy about the causality of the sacraments (100). The terminology represented common ground for the thirteenth-century Scholastics; the dispute was about its interpretation. Expounding his own view, St Thomas was naturally anxious to avoid the ambiguity of ex opere operato. There was all the more point to this carefulness since St Thomas's own position had undergone considerable modification since his early days in Paris (101).

A typical example of the contrast is to be found in III, q. 63, a. 1, ad 3 as compared with In IV Sent., d. 4, q. 1, a. 4, sol. 1 ad 2 (p. 163, n. 93). In both places it is objected that the sacraments of the Church do not cause a character, because the Old-Law sacraments did not do so, and

(100) - Cf. III, q. 62, a. 1.

(101) - Cajetan and most of the Thomistic school since his time are decisive in asserting that the teaching of the Summa on physical causality of the sacraments represents the term of such a development; cf. CAJETAN, in III, q. 62, a. 1.

yet they distinguished the faithful from non-believers just as much as the New-Law sacraments. The replies should be compared;

Sentences

'It is to be said that the sacraments of the Old Law gave nothing ex opere operato. Consequently, those actions did not demand any spiritual power. Consequently, a character was given neither by them nor for them' (102).

Summa theologiae

'It is to be said that, as already stated, the sacraments of the Old Law had not in themselves a spiritual efficacy for causing any spiritual effect. Consequently, a spiritual character was not demanded in those sacraments; bodily circumcision ... was sufficient' (103).

In one important respect only do these two replies differ, namely, in the formulation of the governing principle. In the Sentences appears :

'The sacraments of the Old Law gave nothing ex opere operato' ;

(102) - In IV Sent., d. 4, q. 1, a.4, sol. 1, ad 2 (p. 163, n. 93): 'Ad secundum dicendum quod sacramenta veteris legis ex opere operato nihil conferebant. Et ideo illae actiones non requirebant aliquam spiritualem potestatem. Et ideo nec ab illis nec ad illa imprimebatur character.'

(103) - III, q. 63, a.1, ad 3: 'Ad tertium dicendum quod, sicut supra dictum est, sacramenta veteris legis non habebant in se spiritualem virtutem ad aliquem spiritualem effectum operantem. Et ideo in illis sacramentis non requirebatur aliquis spiritualis character, sed sufficiebat ibi corporalis circumcisio ...' The sense of spiritualis virtus is made clear in III, q. 62, a. 4, ad 1 (quoted below, n. 113).

in the Summa :

'The sacraments of the Old Law had not in themselves a spiritual efficacy for causing any spiritual effect'.

In the contrast between these two replies is crystallized the development of teaching and of vocabulary from the Sentences to the Summa.

In the Sentences, it may be recalled briefly, St Thomas teaches that the sacraments of the New Law are used by God as instruments in justifying men in so far as

'they attain instrumentally a certain effect in the soul, which immediately corresponds to the sacraments, that is to say, the character or the like',

namely, the ornatus animae; but the final effect, grace, they do not attain even instrumentally, except 'dispositively' in so far as what they instrumentally attain is a disposition which of itself calls necessarily for grace (104). Likewise, the ministers of the sacraments cooperate with God in giving

(104) - In IV Sent., d. 1, q. 1, a. 4, sol. 1 (p. 32, nn. 127, 128): '... Deus ... utitur sacramentis quasi quibusdam instrumentis justificationis ... Ad ultimum autem effectum quod est gratia, non pertingunt etiam instrumentaliter, nisi dispositive, inquantum hoc ad quod instrumentaliter effective pertingunt, est dispositio, quae est necessitas, quantum in se est, ad gratiae susceptionem.' Cf. ib., d. 18, q. 1, a. 3, sol. 1 (p. 942, n. 80); ib., ad 1 (p. 943, n. 86); ib., ad 2 (p. 944, n. 87).

grace in so far as through the sacraments they dispose the soul for the action of God; and this is something they do ex opere operato, not by their own powers (105). This means that the

'spiritual power which is given to the ministers of the Church is efficacious, just as is the power of the sacraments, in respect of some interior effect, but not in respect of giving grace ... except by administering the sacraments, in the manner that has been explained in connection with the sacraments' (106).

When, therefore, St Thomas, in the reply under discussion (107), denies that the sacraments of the Old Law gave anything ex opere operato, he is denying to them two modes of causality: first, instrumental production of a character or an ornatus animae; second, dispositive causality of grace, which may be reduced to moral causality in so far as the giving of grace by God is, per se, a necessary consequence of the disposition. This means that in respect of these sacraments he is denying two distinct forms of divine causality: first, through the instrumentality of the sacrament;

(105) - In IV Sent., d. 5, q. 1, a. 2 (p. 204, n. 28).

(106) - In IV Sent., d. 5, q. 1, a. 2, ad 1 (p. 204, n. 29).

(107) - In IV Sent., d. 4, q. 1, a. 4, sol. 1, ad 2 (p. 163, n. 93; quoted above, n. 102).

second, immediately in the soul. Conversely, it is these two forms of causality that he affirms in respect of the New-Law sacraments when he says that they produce their effect ex opere operato. This we may call a 'dualistic' theory of sacramental causality.

The merit of this rather vague phrase - ex opere operato, by what is done - is that it embraces both forms of causality, not only that exercised physically (as we should say nowadays) by the sacrament in producing the ornatus animae, but also the immediate divine intervention in the soul, productive of grace, that is demanded by the sacrament. Efficacy ex opere operato is a neat, shorthand way of combining in one expression the distinct relations of character (ornatus) and of grace to the sacramental ceremony and likewise to the sacramental power of the minister and the subject (108).

(108) - The Council of Trent also recognized in ex opere operato the advantages of a phrase that straddles various modes of causality. Having no intention of patronizing any particular Catholic theory, the Council was concerned solely with condemning the heresy that the sacraments have no efficacy in giving grace beyond what any meritorious act has. Cf. Sess. 7, De sacramentis in genere, can. 8 (Denz. 851). The discussions on the wording of the canon reveal the various currents of thought that run through it; cf. Acta (ed. Goerr.) t. 5, pp. 984 f.

By the time he came to write the reply to the corresponding objection in the Summa, St Thomas had evolved his own simplified, cohesive theory of redemption and the sacraments (109). The two major changes from the teaching of the Sentences are the attribution of instrumental efficient causality to the Passion of Christ (110) which is active in the sacraments of the New Law (111); and the assertion that grace is caused through the sacraments themselves (112). In the Summa, consequently, there is no question of divine intervention accompanying the sacraments, giving grace immediately. Both effects of the sacrament are thought of as caused physically by the sacrament itself in virtue of a spiritual efficacy, virtus spiritualis (113), communicated

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- (109) - Cf. M.-B. LAVAUD, O.P., S Thomas et la causalité physique instrumentale de la sainte humanité et des sacraments, RT 32 (1927) pp. 292-316.
- (110) - Cf. III, q. 48, a. 6; cp. In IV Sent., d. 1, q. 1, a. 4, sol. 3 (p. 36, n. 151); ib., d. 4, q. 3, a. 3, sol. 3 (p. 193, n. 266).
- (111) - Cf. III, q. 62, a. 5.
- (112) - Cf. I-II, q. 112, a. 1, ad 2; III, q. 62, a. 1.
- (113) - Cf. III, q. 62, a. 4, ad 1: 'Nihil tamen prohibet in corpore esse virtutem spiritualem instrumentalem, ... Et hoc modo vis spiritualis est in sacramentis, inquantum ordinantur ad effectum spiritualem'; ib., ad 3.

to them by God and by the Passion of Christ. The sacraments of the Old Law could not have this spiritual efficacy since the Passion of Christ, 'the cause of human justification', had not yet taken place (114).

This simplified, though profound, concept of the causality of grace by the sacraments dispenses with the need for an omnibus, juridical phrase like the Sentences 'ex opere operato', and at the same time it provides St Thomas's personal development of the traditional belief of the Church, formulated by the phrase.

A disadvantage of St Thomas's omission of the terminology from the Summa is that, although we have a very full explanation of the meaning of ex opere operato, there is no explicit definition of opus operatum. Nor is the definition of the Sentences sufficiently detailed, for there it is called ipsum sacramentum; in the Summa, however, the notion of sacrament is much more developed than it was in the Sentences. Indeed, a whole new perspective is opened up on the sacrament with St Thomas's elaboration of the theology of sign. In the

(114) - Cf. III, q. 62, a. 6.

Summa, too, St Thomas has developed the notion of sacramental character as an instrumental power, a participation in the priest^ehood of Christ; and this hints at a new understanding of the sacramental activity of the subject of the sacraments and of his relation to the opus operatum. St Thomas merely sketches the outlines of all this. The following chapters attempt to fill in some of the details and to express the results in the form of the now universally accepted terminology, opus operans, opus operatum.

APPENDIX

Note on Burgundio's translation of 'De fide orthodoxa'.

A recently published critical edition of the translation of St John Damascene's De fide orthodoxa made by Burgundio of Pisa makes available the text largely used by the theologians of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (115). Peter

(115) - St John Damascene, De fide orthodoxa. Version of Burgundio and Cerbanus, edited by Eligius M. BUYTAERT, O.F.M.; Franciscan Institute publications, Text series no. 8; N(ew) Y(ork), Louvain, Paderborn, 1955. - The editor dates Burgundio's translation, 1153-1154 (p. ix).

Lombard probably had in his possession only chs. 2-8 of Bk.3 (according to the later division) and from him most of the theologians of the late twelfth century drew their knowledge of Damascene (116). The complete translation was, however, currently used among the Scholastics by the time of Alexander of Hales and St Bonaventure; and was certainly used by St Thomas (117). In this connection the existence of two concordances on Damascene prepared about 1238-1240 by Hugh of St Cher and the school of St Jacques should be noted (118).

The passages of ch. 59 (Bk 3, ch. 15) from which St Thomas, in In III Sent., d. 18, a. 1, quotes apotelesma as a synonym for opus operatum are worth noticing.

The word apotelesma occurs several times in the chapter and each time is glossed by the translator in the same way (119).

(116) - Cf. DE GHELLINCK, Mouvement ..., pp. 368-369, 379-383,

(117) - Cf. MERCATI, Note di letteratura biblica e cristiana antica, XII, p. 141-144, in Studi e testi, t. 5, Rome, 1901.

(118) - Cod. Paris, Nat. lat. 17811 contains two alphabetical, topical concordances of the De fide orthodoxa, one on fol. 87_r a - 105_v b, and a different one on fol. 106_r a - 121_v a; the first incomplete, the second apparently complete. (Cf. Buytaert, op. cit., pp. xviii, xix.)

(119) - Cf. Buytaert, p. 228, line 13; p. 229, l. 26; p. 230, ll. 39, 40; ib., l. 44; p. 231, l. 50; etc.

The oldest available manuscript is Cod. Vat. lat. 313 (120). Probably of French origin, it has been annotated by four different hands, two from the thirteenth to the fourteenth century, one from the fifteenth (121). The first time apotelesma occurs in the chapter this manuscript has : 'Energima autem (id est actio) est actionis apotelesma (id est opus)' (122). For the remainder of the chapter it agrees with the other manuscripts in: '(id est operis perfectio)' as the gloss. The first annotator, however, each time this occurs, has written above 'perfectio' the correction 'opus' (123). It is not clear whether he intends the reading to be 'operis opus' or simply 'opus' as in the first occurrence.

Whatever be the significance of the annotator's contribution - and little more can be said than that it testifies to an interpretation accepted by some of St Thomas's contemporaries - the juxtaposition in all the manuscripts of operis perfectio and apotelesma might not unreasonably be proposed ?

(120) - Cf. Buytaert, p. xxxv: '... from the early thirteenth century, if not from the end of the twelfth, which makes it the oldest Burgundio manuscript we know.'

(121) - Cf. Buytaert, p. xxxvi.

(122) - Cf. Buytaert, p. 228, ll. 12, 13.

(123) - Cf. Buytaert, p. 230, l. 40; l. 44; p.231, l.50, etc.

to have suggested to St Thomas's mind the phrase opus operatum as a scholastic equivalent for Damascene's term. What makes this hypothesis more attractive is the frequency of the references to Damascene in St Thomas's explanation of the causality of the sacraments. Some explanation there must be of St Thomas's affection for the phrase in the Sentences. None of his predecessors or contemporaries made so much of it. Since Damascene played so large a part in forming his teaching it is natural that St Thomas should have tried to keep as close to his vocabulary as possible at the same time as making use of a distinction already current in sacramental theology.

Conclusions on St Thomas's use of the terminology

I The pair, opus operans, opus operatum, has for St Thomas primarily a moral significance in accordance with the original use of the terminology by the Scholastics, exemplified especially in the problems arising from the crucifixion and the sacraments of the Old Law. Thus it serves to distinguish two aspects of an action: first, as proceeding from an agent and as morally imputable to him (opus operans); and second, as having in itself a certain moral independence (opus

operatum). Though by the middle of the thirteenth century some liberty was taken in applying the distinction to more complex situations, the formal idea of the opus operatum as something, under one aspect at least, independent of the moral dispositions of the agent was undisputed.

II When applied to the sacraments, opus operans has for St Thomas, as for all the twelfth- and thirteenth-century theologians who used it, an exclusively moral sense. It implies nothing more when it is used in a sacramental context than it does when it is used of any act of virtue or vice. The form opus operantis is all but unknown to St Thomas, occurring only once in the printed editions of his work on the sacraments. The modern use of opus operantis, denoting dispositions for the reception of the effect of the sacrament, was not explicitly recognized by St Thomas. He uses opus operans and 'disposition' in different contexts. Though it may be argued that the same reality is denoted by both terms, and that, therefore, modern usage represents a legitimate development of St Thomas's terminology, it is a matter for question whether the basic idea of opus operans as personal use of the sacraments, differing in no way from normal meritorious activity, and the implications of this idea.

have been retained by all modern theologians.

III Opus operatum, ex opere operato, in the fundamental sense of their application to the sacraments, denominate the sacrament in relation to the minister and subject. They deny its dependence for its powers on their merit or virtuous activity. But they abstract a) from the specific nature of the sacrament, and hence from its specific mode of activity, and the specific effect it causes; b) from the dispositions required in the subject for receiving the effect; c) from the identity of the agent or agents to whose merit and causality the effect is due.

IV Building on this normal application of a general distinction to the sacraments, St Thomas permits three developments in his usage of it. Firstly, he uses opus operatum as a synonym for 'sacrament' and can say, for example, that the effect of the opus operatum is ex opere operato in the sense that its nature is determined by the ceremony performed. This is a predicate that belongs ^{to} the specific opus operatum which is a sacrament, not to the idea of opus operatum itself.

Secondly, in the case of baptism of children, St Thomas

uses ex opere operato to denominate justification that requires no dispositions on the part of the subject. This development of vocabulary is possible because ex opere operato refers to a mode of causality. By the addition or implication of an exclusive clause, it can be made^{to} signify causality which is independent of dispositions in its subject.

Thirdly, in one place, almost casually, St Thomas raises the simple juridical idea of opus operatum onto a most lofty plane by attributing it to God: ex opere operato quod est opus Dei. It appears legitimate to say that this attribution is in this place based on a slight play on words - though evidently prompted by theological, if not philological or historical, reasons. This improper use of opus operatum leaves the way open for later theologians to develop a derived, mystical sense of what was originally a moral, not to say legal, term.

V The opus-operatum terminology appears only rarely outside the Sentences. Its absence from the Summa - where it could quite well be inserted without altering the teaching - is to be explained by St Thomas's interest in the controversy about the causality of the sacraments. The terminology represented common ground for the thirteenth-century

Scholastics; the dispute was about its interpretation. Expounding his own view, St Thomas was naturally anxious to avoid the ambiguity of ex opere operato. There was all the more point to this carefulness since St Thomas's own position had undergone considerable modification since his early work.

CHAPTER TWO

SACRAMENTALISM IN THE "SUMMA THEOLOGIAE"

Summary: Introduction. The definition of sacrament in the Summa. Consequences in St Thomas's teaching: sacramental humanism. The sacraments as signs: signs of faith; worship. The sacramental economy of the New Law. The pre-eminence of the Eucharist, unifying all Christian worship. The Church as the sacramental community. The sacramental character. Conclusions.

If St Thomas left aside in the Summa the terminology, opus operans, opus operatum, it was only that he might penetrate more deeply into the reality hidden beneath it. His explanation of the sense of ex opere operato is immediately to hand in the articles he devotes specifically to the discussion of the problem of the physical causality exercised by the sacraments. He says a great deal also that indicates the sense to be attached to opus operatum and opus operans; but this is scattered through his treatise on the sacraments and some of it is given only in hints or suggested by the approach he adopts to problems. Lay participation in the liturgy was not the discussed problem in the thirteenth century that it is today. Consequently, St Thomas is not concerned to define explicitly the relation between opus operans

and opus operatum. Since this involves his whole concept of the sacraments it is proposed in this chapter to sketch out the broad lines of the treatise that begins in q. 60 of the Tertia Pars, filling in details of importance for this study. Later chapters will explore more fully the implications of what is discovered here.

The definition of sacrament in the Summa

The debate about physical causality of the sacraments has not infrequently served to give a false emphasis to accounts of St Thomas's sacramental teaching. The importance he attached to physical causality is not to be denied. For him it is precisely this property that raises the seven sacraments of the Church above those of the Old Law. At the same time, in the Summa, he is at some pains to show that this is something adventitious, accidental, to the basic character of the sacraments which is that of signs (1). In the

(1) - Cf. H.-F. DONDAINE, La définition des sacraments dans la Somme théologique, RSPT 31 (1947), pp. 214-228; and P.-Th. CAMELOT, Réalisme et symbolisme dans la doctrine eucharistique de s Augustin, ib., pp. 394-410, tracing this concept to St Augustine.

Sentences his approach has not got this humanistic orientat-X
 ion. There, following the Victorine tradition, he regards
 the sacraments primarily as causes of grace (2); only
 because of the condition of men does he grant that they are,
 in a secondary way, signs. In common with his contemporaries,
 he uses in the Sentences the idea of remedy to establish a
 synthesis between signification and efficient causality (3).
 In the Summa he revises his outlook (4). A sacrament, he
 argues, is denominated from 'sanctity' which is not an
 efficient, but a formal or final, cause. Hence a sacrament
 is not necessarily an efficient cause (5). He rejects the
 three definitions commonly accepted in the thirteenth century,
 all of them being in terms of causality of grace; and he
 adopts instead a general definition: 'a sign of something

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- (2) - Cf. In IV Sent., d. 8, q. 1, a. 1, sol. 1 (p. 306, n.14): 'Secundum hoc aliquid habet rationem sacramenti secundum quod habet rationem sanctificationis qua sanctum aliquid fit.' And ib., d. 1, q.1, a. 1, sol.1, ad 5 (p. 13, n. 31).
- (3) - Cf. In IV Sent., d. 1, q. 1, a. 1, sol. 1, ad 1 (p.12, n. 26): 'Quamvis significatio non sit de ratione curationis simpliciter, est tamen de ratione curationis talis quae fit per sacramenta.'
- (4) - Cf. III, q. 60, aa. 1, 2.
- (5) - Cf. III, q. 60, a. 1, ad 1.

holy', sacrae rei signum. Since the thing is signified by the sacraments only as bearing some relation to men, he qualifies the definition by the addition 'in so far as it sanctifies men', inquantum est sanetificans homines (6). Thus, whereas his contemporaries altered the genus of the general definition (saying, signum et causa rei sacrae), St Thomas left this intact and altered instead the specific difference (signum rei sacrae sanctificantis homines). This is a definition that applies to the sacraments of both Old and New Law, and likewise to those of the law of nature. St Thomas does not introduce the idea of efficient causality, the distinctive property of the New-Law sacraments, until q. 62, after he has discussed the composition and purpose of the sacraments. The change in emphasis is brought out strikingly by one element of St Thomas's method. He bases his articles dealing with the causality of the sacraments, not on a Scholastic principle (as in the Sentences), but

(6) - That this clause refers to rei sacrae, and not to signum, is clear from III, q. 60, a. 2: 'Proprie dicitur sacramentum quod est signum alicuius rei sacrae ad homines pertinentis'.

directly on the Scriptures (7). By this constant reference to the sources he demonstrates clearly the adventitious, mysterious, wholly gratuitous, character of the fact that the seven sacraments actually contain the grace they signify. Sacramentaliter is for St Thomas synonymous with significative (8).

The classical commentators note St Thomas's point of view and develop its implications. Thus, John of St Thomas (9) who probably appreciated this idea more than any other Thomist: a sacrament is an arbitrary sign, and as such has no formal existence except as a relation: signum ad placitum quod est relatio rationis. The essential difference of the New-Law sacraments is not that they cause grace (causare), but that they signify grace in a special way, namely, as

(7) - Cf. III, q. 62, a. 1; q. 69, a. 4; q. 72, a. 7; q. 79, a. 1.

(8) - Cf. III, q. 78, a. 2, ad 2: '... sacramentaliter, id est, secundum vim significationis'; q. 78, a. 4, ad 3: the words of consecration are 'sacramentally' effective, i.e., 'vis conversiva quae est in formis horum sacramentorum consequitur significationem'; Comp. theol., c. 239: 'Mors Christi est causa remissionis ... et effective instrumentaliter et exemplaris sacramentaliter'. Cf. H. SCHILLEBEECKX, De sacramentele heilseconomie, Antwerp, 1952, pp. 131-143.

(9) - JOHN OF ST THOMAS, Cursus theologicus, Tr. de sacramentis, disp. 22, a. 1.

present through the Passion of Christ and through the sacraments themselves (significare taliter, viz., gratiam praesentem per passionem et per ipsamet sacramenta). They are practical, not merely speculative, signs. This does not mean of itself that they produce what they signify, but simply that they signify something which is to be produced. Their proper operation is that of directing towards the end, not of being themselves involved in achieving the end: dirigens ad finem non directum ad illum. This is a matter of formal extrinsic and final causality (corresponding to the intellectual and voluntary elements of the imperium that is expressed by a practical sign) (10). Besides this, the sacraments of the Church actually produce the effect that they signify; and they do this as physical, efficient instruments of God. This new efficacy cannot be exercised by them formally as signs; as such they are relationes rationis. It is the sensible reality of the sign, the physical entity

(10) - Cf. X. MAQUART, La causalité du signe. Réflexions sur la valeur philosophique d'une explication théologique, RT 10 (1927) pp. 40-60; a critique of Fr Billot's explanation of the causality of the sacraments. As signs, formally, the sacraments cannot produce grace. See above.

that supports the form of signification, that is elevated and applied by God instrumentally (11). Thus the sacrament of the Church is operative on two levels: formally as a sign it signifies the giving of grace; and at the same time, as a physical reality, if duly received, it causes grace and its other effects instrumentally. It is very important to distinguish these two aspects of the sacrament: sign and cause.

There are two extremes to be avoided in a theology of the sacraments of the Church. Since what it is concerned with are sacraments, these are not to be simply tagged with the Aristotelian category of 'efficient cause'. That is a last-ditch stand against Protestantism and means the surrender of St Thomas's finely-wrought humanism and indeed of the whole theological tradition. On the other hand, it must be maintained that the sacraments of the Church are indeed causes of grace; and St Thomas himself is the theologian

(11) - JOHN OF ST THOMAS, loc. cit., disp. 22, a. 1, n. 15:
 'Id quod assumitur ad instrumentaliter causandum in sacramentis non est ipsa forma seu ratio signi, sed id quod naturale et sensibile est in sacramentis.'

who goes farthest in this affirmation, saying that they are efficient, instrumental causes of grace.

Thomists are not agreed on how the two elements of the sacraments are related to each other. Billuart distinguishes what is proper to the genus of sign and what belongs to the sacraments precisely as instituted by Christ. Considering the sacraments the first way, causality is not essential to them formally, since causality is outside the genus of sign. Considering them the second way, causality is essential to them formally, 'not by reason of the sign, but in so far as they belong to the New Law and are instituted by Christ' (12).

John of St Thomas's explanation is, however, supported by the Salmanticenses (12a) who insist that a single reality cannot belong to two genera, since it possesses a single form. Hence it follows that whatever causality (physical or moral) belongs to the sacraments (other than that proper to signs) is to be attributed to them, not by reason of their formal existence as signs, but by reason of their underlying physical reality. This argument appears unanswerable.

(12) - BILLUART, Summa sancti Thomae ... , De sacramentis in communi, diss. 1, a. 1 (pp. 100, 101).

(12a) - SALMANTICENSES, Cursus theologicus, tr. 22, disp. 1, dub. 1.

Consequences of this view in St Thomas's teaching.

Consequences of this initial taking of position are to be noted throughout St Thomas's tract on the sacraments. The notions of remedy, hierarchic action, infusion of grace, conspicuous in the Sentences, give place in the Summa to others: that of Christian worship (13), that of the analogy of bodily life (14), that simply of sign (15). It is especially the notion of Christian worship that is brought into prominence in the Summa. It counter-balances the idea of sanctification in III, q. 60, a. 5; that of remedy in q. 62, a. 5 and q. 63, a. 2; it passes to the foreground in q. 65, a. 1; and it is used to link the sacraments to the priesthood of Christ in q. 62, a. 5 and q. 63, a. 3. Thus, as a direct consequence of his insistence that the sacraments are signs, St Thomas places them without difficulty in the scheme of human worship. As cult acts they naturally lead to participation in God's gifts. It is a mark of their perfection that they conduct these gifts directly to men.

(13) - Cf. III, q. 60, a. 5; q. 62, a. 2; a. 5; q. 63, a. 3; q. 65, a. 1.

(14) - Cf. III, q. 65, a. 1; q. 72, a. 1; q. 73, a. 1.

(15) - Cf. III, q. 84, a. 1.

This thoroughly humanistic approach to the sacraments falls into place in the complete scheme of St Thomas's theology and it is only when it is seen in its context that its essentially relative value can be appreciated. God, the first principle of created being, moves in his providence all things towards himself as their supreme goal. He moves each according to its own nature, so that those creatures that do not enjoy freedom of choice attain their goal necessarily, and those endowed with freedom, freely (16). In St Thomas's delicately articulated theology of predestination, the divine foreknowledge, and justification of the sinner, it is the principle of absolute primacy and independence of God in knowledge and power that reigns supreme. It is by stressing this very primacy that St Thomas safeguards man's freedom, saying that God's will is so efficacious that, not only do those things happen that he wills, but that they happen in the manner that he wills, either necessarily or contingently (17).

Hence a second principle that dominates St Thomas's theology: that of God's sharing his causality with second-

(16) - Cf. I, q. 22; q. 105, a. 5; De Pot., q. 3, a. 7.

(17) - Cf. I, q. 19, a. 8; q. 14, a. 13; q. 23, a. 6; I-II, q. 113, a. 3.

ary and instrumental causes (18). In the scheme of justification of fallen man God wills to operate through the merits and efficient causality of Christ, through the Church, and through the free activity of man himself responding to divine grace.

In this strictly theological view the sacraments are seen as signifying and realizing the divine decree of justification (19). They represent in visible fashion the contact between God and man which directs the latter to his supreme goal. They therefore imply several elements: the gift of grace to one belonging to the fallen human race who has the proper dispositions, the whole being achieved by divine power, through the mediation of Christ and of the Church.

These two concepts of the sacraments - the humanistic and the 'theological' - are complementary. The primacy given to the notion of sign and worship in the Third Part of the Summa stresses the part man plays in the justification which is worked in him by God. When the emphasis shifts to the

(18) - Cf. I, q. 19, a. 2; q. 22, a. 3; q. 92, a. 2; q. 104, a. 2; III, q. 43, a. 2; q. 48, a. 6; q. 61.

(19) - Cf. III, q. 60, a. 5; q. 62, a. 1.

giving of grace the human element is not forgotten. It is the intimate inter-play of God and man in the latter's justification and progress in charity, projected into the realm of signs and actually at work, that constitutes the sacraments. What St Thomas meant by calling them signs must now be more closely examined.

The sacraments as signs

St Thomas explains first what is signified by the sacraments (20). He explores the idea of sanctification of man and proposes three objects which are implied in it: the meritorious cause of sanctification which is the Passion; the form of sanctification, grace and the virtues; the final stage of sanctification, eternal life. Since a sign, however, must be directed towards an intellect, St Thomas goes on to say that the sacraments are meant to bring man to knowledge of the realities which sanctify him (21). These, being supernatural realities, can be known only by faith (22). This is the basic meaning of the phrase so often repeated by

(20) - Cf. III, q. 60, a. 3.

(21) - Cf. III, q. 60, a. 4; q. 81, a. 1, ad 3.

(22) - Cf. III, q. 60, a. 6.

St Thomas: the sacraments are signs of faith (23). This is to say that the realities signified by the sacraments may be known only by faith and that the sacraments can therefore act as signs only in virtue of faith (24). Since use of the sacraments necessarily implies a profession of faith, therefore, it is likewise an act of worship. Whoever joins personally in this profession of faith thereby sanctifies himself and thus St Thomas distinguishes two elements in the use of all sacraments (including those of the Old Law and the law of nature): divine worship and sanctification (25).

Implicit in these first articles of St Thomas's tract on the sacraments is all that he has already discussed in connection with faith, the virtue of religion, and the Incarnation.

Necessary, first of all, because of man's elevation to the supernatural order (26), faith has for fallen man a new

(23) - Cf. III, q. 61, a. 3, ad 2; q. 61, a. 4: 'signa protestantia fidem qua homo justificatur'; q. 62, a. 5, ad 2: 'virtus sacramentorum quae ordinatur ad tollendum peccata, praecipue est ex fide passionis Christi'; q. 72, a. 5, ad 2: 'omnia sacramenta sunt quaedam protestationes fidei'; q. 80, a. 2, ad 2; see below, n. 43.

(24) - In this chapter abstraction is being made from faith of the Church and of the individual.

(25) - Cf. III, q. 60, a. 5.

(26) - Cf. II-II, q. 2, a. 3.

material object, namely, Christ and the redemption wrought by him. Justification for all men, whether living under the Old or the New Law, is to be won by faith in Christ (27) and principally in his Passion (28).

Worship springs from the acknowledgement by man of his creaturehood. It is the due reverence paid to God by reason of his unique and incommunicable excellence as source and governing principle of all created being (29). Beginning in an instinctive movement of awe when the rational creature is confronted by an even partially appreciated notion of God (30) - a movement that is controlled by the Gift of Fear in the supernatural order (31) - worship is the matter of the moral virtue of religion (32). This virtue enables man to order all his activity in such fashion as to obtain that good which is the payment, in the measure possible, of the debt

(27) - Cf. I-II, q. 98, a. 2, ad 4.

(28) - Cf. III, q. 49, a. 1, ad 5.

(29) - Cf. A.M. HORVÁTH, O.P., Annotationes ad II-II, qq. 81-90, Rome, 1929; I. MENNESSIER, O.P., La religion, t. 1, (Somme théol. Ed. Rev. des Jeunes), Paris, 1932.

(30) - Cf. II-II, q. 22, a. 2.

(31) - Cf. II-II, q. 7, a. 1; op. q. 19, a. 10, ad 3; De Ver., q. 28, a. 4, ad 4.

(32) - Cf. II-II, q. 81, aa. 4, 5.

of justice which he owes to God. The material object of religion is formed by the various acts which may be so referred to God: the proper expression, whether interior or exterior, of our submission to God (devotion, prayer, adoration, sacrifice, etc.), and acts of the other virtues in so far as, by controlling our conduct in accordance with the law of God, they become so many ways of demonstrating our submission to him (33).

The connection between faith and worship is stated by St Thomas in In Boetium de Trinitate (34):

'Acts of faith fall under the material object of religion, as do the acts of all the virtues, with the added reason that the act of faith is the first movement of the mind towards God. Formally, however, faith is distinct from religion since it has its own object. Apart from this, faith has a special relation to religion because it is religion's cause and source. No one would worship God unless he believed that God ~~unless he believed that God~~ was creator and ruler and rewarder of human action.'

(33) - Cf. II-II, qq. 82, f.

(34) - Lect. 1, q. 1, a. 2: 'Actus fidei pertinent quidem materialiter ad religionem, sicut et actus aliarum virtutum, et magis inquantum fidei actus est primus motus mentis in Deum. Sed formaliter a religione distinguitur utpote aliam rationem obiecti considerans. Convenit etiam fides cum religione praeter hoc, inquantum fides est religionis causa et principium. Non enim aliquis eligeret cultum Deo exhibere, nisi fide teneret Deum esse creatorem, gubernatorem, et remuneratorem humanorum actuum.'

Is not faith itself a new motive for worship?

Faith does not give new motives for worship, but it proposes the essential natural motives with greater certitude; also it regulates the intellect in the new, specifically Christian elements of worship. In this fashion it gives to external worship the character of an affirmation of faith, protestatio fidei.

One of the most important things that St Thomas says about the virtue of religion is that it is a moral virtue (35). Among men, honour, the expression of reverence, results in that clara notitia cum laude that is considered the highest reward for excellence. The transcendent excellence of God excludes any such accidental perfection. To say that worship procures his 'external glory' is not to find a very happy phrase. St Thomas is clear: only man profits by the worship he offers :

'We pay God reverence and honour, not to benefit him who is in himself full of glory and to whom no creature can give anything. We do it for our own sakes; because, when we reverence and honour God, our spirit is submitted to him and in this finds its perfection; for everything is perfected by being subordinated to something higher than itself' (36).

(35) - Cf. II-II, q. 81, a. 5.

(36) - II-II, q. 81, a. 7: 'Deo reverentiam et honorem exhibemus non propter ipsum, qui in seipso est gloria plenus, cui nihil a creatura adduci potest, sed

From this follow two vital principles for sacramental theology. The first concerns the necessity of external acts of religion. If man is to perfect himself by religion he must exercise the virtue in the fashion demanded by his psychological make-up, and thus with some form of external activity (37).

The second principle concerns the two-fold aspect of religion. Formally it consists in the respectful recognition of God's sovereign excellence; materially, in the perfection of the creature. It is a moral virtue which pursues a human good and realizes in man a personal perfection, but which does so in the accomplishment of duties which are purely disinterested because their formal motive is the honour of God. Our very condition as creatures makes it inevitable that our reasonable service of God should have this double face, whether we advert to the fact or not. This is a point of cardinal importance for sacramental theology, for it

./.. - propter nos; quia videlicet per hoc quod Deum reveremur et honoramus, mens nostra ei subicitur, et in hoc eius perfectio consistit; quaelibet enim res perficitur per hoc quod subditur suo superiori ...';
cf. ib., a. 6, ad 2.

(37) - Cf. II-II, q. 81, a. 7; q. 91, a. 1, ad 2; q. 30, a.4, ad 1; Cont. Gent., III, c. 119.

indicates already in the general scheme of our religious psychology the place to be taken by the sacraments as causes of grace. Few modern authors refer to the secondary end of worship (38). St Thomas took it for granted (39).

It is evident that the sacraments are going to be 'signs of faith' in this fuller sense of expressing the ^[based on faith] personal worship of those who take part in them only when these - minister and subject - are in the proper dispositions. The Church intends that it should always be so (40). When therefore the sacraments are carried out as they should be, faith is called for on two levels: first, for the very existence of the sacraments as signs; second, for the sacraments to attain their full perfection as signs of worship of those who use them. This will be developed further in the following chapters.

It is because he sees the use of the sacraments as an

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- (38) - Exceptions are A. HORVÁTH, Annotationes ..., p. 24; I. MENNESSIER, La religion, t. 1, p. 319; P. RUPPRECHT, O.S.B., Die Tugend der Religion nach der hl Thomas, DTF 9 (1931) p. 151.
- (39) - Cf., e.g., II-II, q. 81, a. 3, ad 2: 'Per omnes (actus religionis) homo protestatur divinam excellentiam et subiectionem sui ad Deum vel exhibendo aliquid ei, vel iterum assumendo aliquid divinum.' And II-II, q. 87, Prologue.
- (40) - Cf. III, q. 68, a. 8, ad 2.

integral part of worship that St Thomas can make ^tstatements ^X that sound so extraordinary to modern ears :

'The power of the sacraments to take away sin comes principally from faith in the Passion of Christ' (41).

'The words are active in the sacraments, not because they are pronounced, that is, not as sounds, but because they are believed, according to their sense which is received by faith' (42).

'All the sacraments are professions of faith' (43).

Likewise, he says that the ritual of the sacraments is intended to excite devotion in those who use them (44); and that the sacraments are necessary for men to be instructed about the truth (45).

(41) - III, q. 62, a. 5, ad 2: 'Virtus sacramentorum quae ordinatur ad tollendum peccata praecipue est ex fide passionis Christi.'

(42) - III, q. 60, a. 7, ad 1: 'Sicut Augustinus dicit ... verbum operatur in sacramentis, non quia dicitur, id est, non secundum exteriorem sonum vocis; sed quia creditur secundum sensum verborum qui fide tenetur'.

(43) - III, q. 72, a. 5, ad 2: 'Omnia sacramenta sunt quaedam protestationes fidei.' Cf. also III, q. 60, a. 6; a. 8; q. 61, a. 3; q. 62, a. 6; q. 63, a. 4, ad 3; q. 64, a. 3; a. 9, ad 1; q. 66, a. 1, ad 1; a. 3; a. 6; q. 68, a. 1, ad 1; a. 4, ad 3; a. 9, ad 1; a. 12; q. 69, a. 6, ad 3; a. 9; q. 70, a. 1; a. 2; q. 71, a. 1, ad 3; a. 3, ad 3; q. 78, a. 3, ad 6; In symbol. Apost., Prolog. (800); In Heb., c. 6, lect. 1 (281, 282).

(44) - Cf. III, q. 61, a. 2; q. 64, a. 2, ad 1; q. 66, a. 10; q. 68, a. 3.

(45) - Cf. III, q. 81, a. 1, ad 3; Comm. in Ioann., c. 3, lect. 1, 4 (443).

Less frequently, but no less decisively, St Thomas X?
switches the proposition and declares that in the present
economy profession of faith must be sacramental. This is
the idea that lies behind the notion of receiving a sacra-
ment by desire, in voto. At first sight, this whole concept
appears to involve an artificial reversion from reality to
sign, from grace to sacrament; but St Thomas gives his
explanation for it when he explains why he attaches interior
adherence to Christ to the sacrament of the Eucharist (46).
Union with Christ, manducatio Christi, in his proper species
is confined to those already in heaven. Men still on earth
can 'eat' Christ, even spiritually, only under the sacramental
species which are the food of the Church; and this eating is
ordained to the eating of heaven as to its end. The reason
is that those in heaven are united to Christ by vision; men
on earth only by faith; and the sacraments are the proper
vehicles for expressing faith (47). [20]
[21]
[22]

(46) - Cf. III, q. 80, a.2: '... aliquis credit in Christum cum desiderio sumendi hoc sacramentum. Et hoc non solum est manducare Christum spiritualiter, sed etiam spiritualiter manducare hoc sacramentum'; ib., a. 1, ad 3.

(47) - Ib., ad 1; ad 3; ad 2: 'Sacramenta proportionaturⁿ fidei per quam veritas videtur in speculo et in aenigmate.'

St Thomas remains within the limits of the notion of sign when he makes the primary distinction between the sacraments of the Old Law and those of the New. His principle is that:

'Exterior worship must be adapted to interior worship which consists in faith, hope and charity. Consequently, according to the variations in interior worship, exterior worship ought to vary' (48).

The faith of the New Law, though it is substantially the same as that of the Old (49), differs in so far as it bears on Christ as one already come, and not as a future Redeemer:

'It is necessary, however, to find different signs to express things that are in the future, those that are in the past, and those that are present',

just as different words are used for these ideas (50).

It is precisely at this point that St Thomas inserts the idea of physical causality into his scheme of the sacraments. Since the sacraments add to the spiritual contact with Christ procured by faith a contact through the use of visible things, he argues, they can derive power from the

(48) - I-II, q. 103, a. 3.

(49) - Cf. I-II, q. 98, a. 2, ad 4.

(50) - III, q. 61, a. 4; cf. I-II, q. 101, a. 2; III, q. 68, a.1, ad 1; In Gal., c. 2, lect. 4 (94); Cont. Gent., IV, c. 57.

passion of Christ as from an efficient cause only after it X
 has actually taken place (51). Hence the sacraments of the
 Old Law were 'weak and needy elements' (52), serving indeed
 as vehicles of worship for the Jews, but doing no more than
 pre-figure the mysteries of Christ (53). The sacraments of
 the New Law, on the contrary, are used by God as separated
 instruments, subordinated to Christ, in producing his proper
 effects in the soul:

'... and in this fashion they are both cause and
 sign ... They produce what they signify. For
 this reason they realize perfectly the concept
 of sacrament in so far as they are related to a
 holy thing, not simply as signs, but also as
 causes' (54).

This is to say that in the sacraments of the Church it is
 their very material elements (as it is the humanity of the
 worshipping Christ) that bring to the subject that spirit-
 ual good to which the virtue of religion (in Christ and in
 his members) is directed. This makes the sacraments the
 first and highest realities in the genus of worshipful acts. X

(51) - Cf. III, q. 62, a. 6.

(52) - Gal., 4: 9; cf. III, q. 62, a. 6, Sed contra; q. 61,
 a. 4, ad 2.

(53) - Cf. I-II, q. 102, a. 2; De Ver., q. 27, a. 4, ad 14.

(54) - III, q. 62, a. 1, ad 1.

The sacramental economy of the New Law

Discussing the ceremonial worship of the Old Law (55), St Thomas develops the idea of an organized system, uniting different sacraments and placing them in an order of objective sanctity or cultual consecration, centering on sacrifice (56). The cultual sanctity of sacrifice (i.e., its relation of signification to religion, the virtue of sanctity, and consequent ordination to the service of God, the source of sanctity) is extended to the minister and rite of the sacrifice, to the vessels used, to the place of sacrifice and its furniture, all of which are specially deputed to external worship. Those too who participate in the sacrifice must be disposed by preliminary consecration and 'sanctifications' - in the Old Law, by circumcision and legal purifications. From all this St Thomas draws a notion of 'sacrament' conceived as a rite of consecration relative to divine worship. He develops a further aspect of this notion when he extends it

(55) - I-II, qq. 101-103.

(56) - Cf. I. MENNESSIER, La religion, t. 1, pp. 364-366; the same author's L'idée du 'sacré' et le culte d'après s. Th., RSPT 19 (1930) pp. 63-82; application to the New Law: M's. Les réalités sacrées dans le culte chrétien d'après s. Th., RSPT 20 (1931) pp. 276-286; A.M. HOFFMAN, O.P., Die Stufen der sanctificatio sacramentalis, DTF 16 (1938) pp. 129-160.

to a rite of participation in the things consecrated by use in the sacrifice - in its most typical form, a sacred repast. Those who take part in the meal signify thereby their dependence on God as the source of all benefits and their union with him achieved by the sacrifice.

On this natural framework of external worship the sacraments of the Church are imposed; but since these sacraments, unlike the Jewish ceremonial, are not purely external rites, but actually bring into being what they signify, they call for a much more finely nuanced theology.

The effect of the Jewish sacraments was purely juridical, giving the subject certain rights and functions in relation to the external worship of the Chosen People (57). The sacraments of the Church, however, says St Thomas,

'are directed towards special effects necessary for Christian life; baptism, for example, is directed towards spiritual regeneration by which a man dies to sin and becomes a member of Christ' (58).

He has the same idea in mind when he says that sacramental grace removes sin and

(57) - Cf. I-II, q. 101, a. 4; q. 102, a. 5.

(58) - III, q. 62, a. 2: 'Ordinantur autem sacramenta ad quosdam speciales effectus necessarios in vita Christiana.'

'perfects the soul in what pertains to the worship of God according to the religion of the Christian life' (59).

St Thomas's use of 'worship', cultus, in this text should be noted. As may be seen from I-II, q. 101, a. 2, the word cultus can refer to either internal or external worship. St Thomas uses it sometimes in one way, sometimes in the other; more often he uses it in a general sense, embracing both internal and external worship (60). In this text it is clear that he uses it in a general sense, and indeed, since it is a question of grace, in the widest sense which embraces the acts of all the virtues in so far as they are imperated by religion (61). St Thomas uses the same concept of Christian life as continual worship in his explanation of the 'holy priesthood' of all the faithful (62).

(59) - III, q. 62, a. 5: 'Gratia sacramentalis ad due praecipue ordinari videtur ... ad perficiendum animam in his quae pertinent ad cultum Dei secundum religionem Christianae vitae.'

(60) - Internal worship: I-II, q. 101, a. 2; ad 4; q. 102, a. 4, ad 3; a. 5, ad 4; q. 103, a. 3; II-II, q. 122, a. 4. External worship: I-II, q. 101, a. 2; ad 3; q. 102, a. 4; a. 5, ad 4; q. 103, a. 1; a. 2; q. 108, a. 3, ad 3; II-II, q. 81, a. 7; ad 2; a. 2, ad 2; q. 94, a. 2; q. 122, a. 4; III, q. 63, a. 5, ad 3; Cont. Gent., III, c. 119. In general: I-II, q. 99, a. 3; ad 1; q. 104, a. 4; q. 102, a. 4, ad 1; ad 3; q. 114, a. 1, ad 2; II-II, q. 30, a. 4, ad 1; q. 81, a. 3, ad 2; a. 5; q. 92, a. 2; III, q. 60, a. 5, ad 3; q. 63, a. 2; a. 3; a. 4; a. 6; etc.

(61) - Cf. II-II, a. 81, a. 8.

(62) - Cf. III, q. 82, a. 1, ad 2 (cf. I Pet., 2:5) : 'Laicus ./.'

The ordination of all sacraments to worship is thus extended by St Thomas in the case of the New-Law sacraments from their reality as signs of faith, therefore as acts of external worship, to the causality which they exercise. Their effects devote man more closely to the service of God.

When he speaks of the sacramental character as a deputation to worship St Thomas makes it clear that, though he regards it in its broader implications as a deputation to the militia of Christian life (63), he understands it formally as a consecration to the external worship of the Church :

'The sacraments of the New Law are directed to two things: to healing from sin and to perfecting the soul in those things that belong to the worship of God according to the rite of the Christian life' (64).

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- ./.
- justus ... habet spirituale sacerdotium ad offerendum spirituales hostias.' - This was the accepted exegesis of I Peter, 2:5 among the early Scholastics and St Thomas's contemporaries; cf. P. DABIN, S.J., Le sacerdoce royal des fidèles dans la tradition ancienne et moderne, Brussels and Paris, 1950, pp. 259-294.
 - (63) - CAJETAN, in III, q. 61, a. 1 (n. 2), places the character in this broad field. Later he qualifies what he says here.
 - (64) - III, q. 63, a. 1: '... et ad perficiendum animam in his quae pertinent ad cultum Dei secundum ritum Christianae vitae.' Cf. q. 63, a. 2: 'Sacramenta Novae Legis characterem imprimunt inquantum per ea deputamur ad cultum Dei secundum ritum Christianae religionis'; q. 63, a. 3: 'Deputatur quisque fidelis ad recipiendum ./.

Rite, ritus, is a word that always has for St. Thomas the sense of external worship (65). He says again :

'The character directly and immediately disposes the soul for carrying out those things that belong to the worship of God',

something that demands ~~grace~~ grace, not essentially (as does worship inspired by the virtue of religion), but only so that it be done fittingly, with full profit (66). The character gives the power to make (not, in itself, to make well) 'a certain profession of faith by external signs' (67) which are proper to the Church (68).

./ - vel tradendum aliis ea quae pertinent ad cultum Dei. Et ad hoc proprie deputatur character sacramentalis. Totus autem ritus Christianae religionis derivatur a sacerdotio Christi'.

(65) - Cf. In IV Sent., d. 4, q. 3, a. 2, sol. 2; d. 6, q. 1, a. 3, sol. 1; ad 1; d. 13, q. 1, a. 2, sol. 6, ad 2; I-II. q. 102, a. 5, qd 7; q. 105, a. 4, ad 6; II-II, q. 10, a. 11; III, q. 66, a. 10; q. 69, a. 9; q. 70, a. 3; q. 72, a. 12; q. 62, a. 6, ad 2; Suppl., q. 40, a. 6, ad 2 (used of the hierarchic organization of the Church). - Thus the suggestion of Ch. JOURNET that ritus may refer to all acts of the virtue of religion, at least of the baptised, is not acceptable; cf. L'Eglise du Verbe incarné, t. II, Paris, 1951, p.615, n. 2.

(66) - Cf. III, q. 63, a. 4, ad 1.

(67) - Cf. ib., ad 3.

(68) - Cf. III, q. 63, a. 1, ad 1; a. 3, ad 3.

It follows that the participation in the priesthood of Christ given by the character is concerned immediately with the rite of the Christian religion, precisely as something external (69),

'... so that the faithful are configured to Christ in that they participate some spiritual power in relation to the sacraments and to those things that belong to divine worship' (70).

How this power which does not pertain to the order of virtue can be a participation in the priesthood of Christ is made clear in III, q. 62, a. 5 and q. 63, a. 3 where it is said that the rite of the Christian religion was 'instituted' by Christ in his Passion, per suam passionem initiavit ritum Christianae religionis, and that it is 'derived' from his priesthood. This contact - which for St Thomas is physical as well as moral - with the Passion of Christ gives to the external worship of the Church's sacramental system an intrinsic, and therefore sanctifying, value, quite independent of the worship of the faithful. The sacraments provide the

(69) - Cf. III, q. 63, a. 3, quoted above, n. 64.

(70) - III, q. 63, a. 5: 'Fideles eius ei configurentur in hoc quod participant aliquam spiritualem potestatem respectu sacramentorum et eorum quae pertinent ad divinum cultum.'

physical link, copula, that brings to the Church Christ in his sacrifice (in the Mass) and as an instrument of God in distributing the fruits of his sacrifice (in the other sacraments).

It is clear, therefore, that though St Thomas sees the sacraments as only part of the broad scheme of worship which is the whole Christian life (in so far as they are signs of faith and actually give grace), he also sees them as containing within themselves their own scheme of worship which is the worship of Christ himself, exercised in the exterior signs, in the rite of the Church, and giving to that rite an inherent efficacy (71). This is, in fact, the res sacra signified by the sacraments: Christ as Head of the Mystical Body offering sacrifice and thus winning the gifts of God, not for himself primarily, but for his members, and being used as the instrument of God in the giving of those gifts. When the Church makes the sacraments the vehicle of her worship too, she receives this fruit of Christ's worship.

These two schemes of worship meeting in the sacraments

(71) - Cf. III, q. 63, a. 6; ad 1.

represent the paradox of the Christian life in which we are redeemed by Christ and yet merit our own salvation. There is not contradiction, but subordination between our merit and Christ's; and likewise our worship is subordinated to his.

The special consecration or deputation necessary for the faithful to take part in this worship of the sacraments is given by baptism which, by imparting a character, 'deputes men to receiving the other sacraments' (72). Thus baptism effects a two-fold incorporation into Christ (73): first, and most important, by grace which draws us into the life of God himself, gives us the means of meriting, and which in the predestined is perfected in the beatific vision; second, by the character which enables us to take part in the sacramental worship of the Church (which takes its value directly from the Passion of Christ) and obtain from it the special graces of the Christian life (74).

(72) - Cf. III. q. 63, a. 6; where it is added: 'and confirmation deposes in a certain way to the same.'

(73) - Cf. III, q. 63, a. 1, ad 1; a. 3, ad 1; ad 3; q. 69, a. 9, ad 1.

(74) - Cf. III, q. 63, a. 6: 'Ad recipientes pertinet sacramentum baptismi, per quod homo accipit potestatem recipiendi alia Ecclesiae sacramenta: unde baptismus dicitur esse janua sacramentorum.'

The second incorporation is directed towards the deepening of the first and so it may be said that the character is ordained directly to the rite of the Christian religion, indirectly to the worship of the Christian religion (using 'worship' in its broadest sense) and to glory (75).

The pre-eminence of the Eucharist

There is sacrifice at the centre of the worship of the New Law as there was in the Jewish ceremonial. But now it is not a repeated sacrifice but the unique sacrifice of Christ (76); and though it is communicated to the Church (77), it does not represent for St Thomas the focal point of the sacramental system. True to his principles that worship is for man's benefit and that the sacraments signify 'a holy thing in so far as it sanctifies man', he sees in the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist the unifying principle

(75) - Cf. III, q. 63, a. 5, ad 3.

(76) - Cf. III, q. 62, a. 5: 'Per suam passionem initiavit ritum Christianae religionis.'

(77) - Cf. III, q. 63, a. 6: 'Per modum ipsius actionis pertinet ad divinum cultum Eucharistiae in qua principaliter divinus cultus consistit, inquantum est Ecclesiae sacrificium.'

of the worship of the sacramental system and of the whole Christian life :

'The Eucharist is the consummation of the spiritual life and the end to which all the sacraments are directed' (78).

Because it contains Christ, the Eucharist is the sacrament of the unity of the Mystical Body, apart from which there can be no salvation (79). Whatever grace is received contributes to this unity, being a potestative part of the grace signified by the Eucharistic Christ. The res of the Eucharist is the end intended in the particular end of each sacrament and the desire of that end is inseparable from the reception of the individual sacraments (80). The characters too are directed towards this end in so far as

Handwritten note: sacramentum totum

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- (78) - III, q. 73, a. 3; cf. q. 75, a. 1: 'Hoc sacramentum quod ipsum Christum realiter continet est perfectivum omnium aliorum in quibus virtus Christi participatur'; Comm. in Matt., c. 26, lect. 3 (2173).
- (79) - Cf. III, q. 73, a. 3; q. 65, a. 3, ad 1; q. 67, a. 2; q. 73, a. 2; a. 3; a. 4; q. 78, a. 3, ad 6; q. 79, a. 1; q. 80, a. 5, ad 2; q. 82, a. 7; etc.
- (80) - Cf. E. SPRINGER, S.J., Zur Frage: Wirkungskreis und Notwendigkeit der Eucharistie, DTF 9 (1931), pp. 203-222; id., Zur Frage: Ist die heilige Eucharistie die Wirkursache aller Gnade ?, ib., pp. 452-458; also Die Taufgnade als Kraftwirkung der Eucharistie, ib., 8 (1930), pp. 421-431; A. HORVÁTH, De totalitate sacramentali, pro manuscripto, no title page, (Library of St Mary's Priory, Tallaght, Dublin; cat.: f. 234.1), pp. 28-35 (fasc. 3).

they give the faculty of using the Eucharist itself or the other sacraments in order to the Eucharist (or are exercised on the Mystical Body) (81).

Union with Christ is the unifying idea of Christian life and liturgy. Based on faith which is outwardly expressed and ratified by the sacrament of baptism, it is perfected in the union of the charity of Christ crucified of which the Eucharist is the sacrament (82). Christ came into the world to achieve this union, and in the Eucharist he comes to each man with the same purpose (83). The Church unceasingly offers the sacrifice of Christ by faith. In the Mass her offering is physically united with that of Christ. In Communion she enters into ever deeper spiritual union with Christ so that she may intensify her offering of his sacrifice.

(81) - Cf. III, q. 73, a. 3: 'Per sanctificationes omnium sacramentorum fit praeparatio ad suscipiendum vel consecrandum Eucharistiam.'; see also q. 65, a. 3.

(82) - Cf. III, q. 73, a. 3, ad 3.

(83) - Cf. III, q. 79, a. 1: 'Effectus huius sacramenti debet considerari primo et principaliter ex eo quod in hoc sacramento continetur, quod est Christus. Qui sicut in mundum visibiliter veniens, contulit mundo vitam gratiae ... ita in hominem sacramentaliter veniens, vitam gratiae operatur'; Comm. in Ioann., c. 6, lect. 6 (963).

The Church as the sacramental community

Though the sacraments are intended to be acts of personal worship offered by the individuals who receive and administer them, they are actions of the whole Church. The phrase, 'the sacraments of the Church', or some variation of it, occurs again and again in the Summa (84). The sacraments are performed according to the intention of the Church (85), they are administered by ministers of the Church (86), who offer prayers in the person of the Church (87). The Church is said to be 'instituted by faith and the sacraments of faith' and 'built by the sacraments' (88). The Eucharist is the sacrament of the unity of the Church (89).

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- (84) - E.g., III, q. 63, a. 6; q. 64, a.4, ad 1; q. 65, a. 1; q. 78, a. 3, ad 9; q. 82, a. 5, Sed contra; q.83, a. 3, ad 1; a. 5, ad 11; q. 84, a. 7, ad 2; q. 87, a. 7; Supp., q. 6, a.1; q. 19, a. 3; cf. Cont. Gent., IV, c. 76; etc.
- (85) - Cf. III, q. 64, a. 9, ad 10; q. 68, a. 8, ad 2; Supp., q. 48, a. 2, ad 3; op. III, q. 60, a. 7, ad 3; a. 8; q. 64, a. 8, ad 2; a. 9, ad 1.
- (86) - Cf. III, q. 64, a.3; a. 5; a. 6; ad 2; ad 3; a. 8, ad 2; a. 9; q. 65, a. 1, ad 3; a. 4; q. 83, a. 3, ad 8; q. 84, a. 1, ad 2; Supp., q. 5, a. 1, ad 3; q. 6, a.6; Cont. Gent., ~~Lib.~~ IV, c. 73; c. 78; etc.
- (87) - Cf. III, q. 64, a. 1, ad 2; q. 82, a. 6; Supp., q. 31, a. 1, ad 1.
- (88) - III, q. 64, a.2, ad 3: '... Ecclesiae institutae per fidem et fidei sacramenta ... per sacramenta ... dicitur esse fabricata Ecclesia Christi.'
- (89) - See above, n. 79.

Likewise, a person who receives a sacrament 'communicates with the Church' (90). Baptism itself gives entry into the Church and its unity (91) and gives a right to partake in the Eucharist (92). It is the Church that makes for the child the profession of faith required for baptism (93).

The sacramental characters which grant a deputation to the use of the sacraments are thus seen as a bond of union with the Church, a means of taking part in acts proper to its present state (94). Apart from that of baptism, which can be administered in case of necessity by any person, consecration to the worship of the Church comes by an uninterrupted physical succession through those already consecrated from Christ and the Apostles themselves (95).

(90) - Cf. III, q. 64, a. 6, ad 2: '... communicat Ecclesiae...'

(91) - Cf. III, q. 66, a. 11, ad 3; q. 68, a. 4; a. 8, ad 2; q. 70, a. 1; a. 2, ad 2; a. 4, ad 2; In I Cor., c. 12, lect. 3 (734); Suppl., q. 8, a. 2, ad 3; q. 21, a. 1; etc.

(92) - Cf. III, q. 67, a. 2; q. 80, a. 6.

(93) - Cf. III, q. 68, a. 9, ad 1; ad 2; ad 3; a. 12; q. 69, a. 6, ad 3; q. 71, a. 1, ad 3; a. 3, ad 3; q. 79, a. 1, ad 1.

(94) - Cf. q. 63, a. 1, ad 1; a. 3, ad 3.

(95) - Cf. Ch. JOURNET, L'Eglise du Verbe incarné, t. I, 2nd ed., Paris, 1955, pp. 91, 92.

Thus, even though sacraments are administered to individuals, recourse may not be had to them except as a member of the community of the Church and supported by its faith.

The sacramental character

The key to the participation of the faithful - priests and laity - in the sacramental life of the Church is the sacramental character. The literature on the character is extensive but much of it has only a remote reference to the most important point of the doctrine, namely, the purpose of the character. The highly publicised debate on the nature and subject of the character, by concentrating attention on these difficulties - which for all their importance are preliminary - has given a false emphasis to the development of the doctrine among theologians. Dom. Soto is one of the few to question the profit of this pre-occupation (96). He shows that errors in selecting the category in which the

(96) - Dom. SOTO, In IV Sent., d. 1, q. 4, a. 2: 'Quaestio haec est in visceribus metaphysicis abstrusa, et ideo cunctis molestior quam theologia necessaria.' Even CAJETAN excuses himself from a close discussion of Scotus's arguments 'quia theologiam practicam tracto, non metaphysicam' (In III, q. 63, a. 2, no. 8).

character is to be placed flow from false conceptions of its function. Alexander of Hales, for example, thinking that its purpose was to dispose the soul for grace, concluded that it was a habit or disposition in the essence of the soul. St Thomas's conclusion that it is a spiritual potency situated in the intellect is likewise to be understood in the light of his thesis that the character is a consecration to divine worship according to the rite initiated by Christ on the cross (97), or simply a participation in the priesthood of Christ (98). For him the

(97) - Cf. III, q. 63, a. 2: 'Per sacramenta deputantur homines ad cultum Dei secundum ritum christianae religionis'; q. 62, a. 5: '(Christus) per suam passionem initiavit ritum christianae religionis'; q. 63, a. 4, ad 3: 'Character ordinatur ad ea quae sunt divini cultus.'

(98) - Cf. III, q. 63, a. 3; a. 5; etc. It was the unanimous teaching of the Fathers that the faithful participate in the priesthood of Christ by baptism and confirmation (in so far as they distinguished these sacraments). St Thomas's originality lies in distinguishing the two modes of this participation, one given by the characters, the other by grace. St Albert had already made this distinction for the sacrament of orders; Cf. B. D'ARGENLIEU, O.P., La doctrine d'Albert le Grand sur le caractère sacramental, RT 11 (1928) pp. 295-311, 479-496.

characters are the point of insertion into man's moral activity of the execution of the divine decree concerning justification through the merits and satisfaction and physical mediation of Christ in the ritual of the Church (99). He makes it clear that he understands the characters to be primarily exercised in the use of the sacraments; but how far beyond these their function extends he does not define. He is particularly vague when he speaks of the character of confirmation and it might be suggested that his thought on this point was not fully developed. He says that through the characters:

'the faithful are configured to Christ in that they share in some spiritual power in relation to the sacraments and to those things that belong to divine worship' (100).

III, q. 63, a. 6 assigns to the characters of orders and baptism rôles that are exclusively sacramental. Though exercised in the administration and reception of all the sacraments, these two characters are primarily directed

(99) - It is for this reason that the character is a spiritual reality, and not simply a bodily mark like circumcision. The sacraments of the Old Law, having value only from the dispositions of their users, did not require any other power than that of the virtue of religion; cf. III, q. 63, a. 1, ad 3.

(100) - III, q. 63, a. 5; Latin text above, n. 70.

towards the Eucharist (101). It is not clear, consequently, whether 'spiritual power in relation ... to those things that belong to divine worship' refers simply to the character of confirmation or to a secondary function of the other characters also (102). The character of confirmation should in any case, it seems, be considered as ordained also, indirectly at least, towards the Eucharist (103).

All three characters already participate in the

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- (101) - Cf. III, q. 63, a. 6; Supp., q. 40, a. 5, ad 2 :
'Ordo, prout est sacramentum imprimens characterem, ordinatur ad sacramentum Eucharistiae, in quo ipse Christus continetur: quia per characterem ipsi Christo configuramur.' See above, n. 81.
- (102) - The same lack of definition is found in the Sentences. Cf. In IV Sent., d. 4, q. 1, a. 2, sol. 1 (p. 154, n. 41): 'Recipiens (characterem) configuretur quasi adscriptus ad communicandum divinis sacramentis et actionibus sacris ... ad participationem sacramentorum et actionum fidelium'; ib., ad 2; ad 3; ad 4; sol. 2, ad 4 (p. 156, n. 52): 'Ista distinctio praecipue attenditur quantum ad operationes et receptiones quae sunt in sacramentis'; d. 4, q. 1, a. 3, sol. 4, ad 2 (p. 160, n. 78): 'Per characterem homo configuratur ad hoc quod sit de coetu fidelium et particeps hierarchicarum actionum'. However, ib., a. 4, sol. 1 (p. 163, n. 91): 'Cum character sit virtus seu potentia spiritualis ad actiones sacramentales ordinata ... oportet quod per sacramenta N.L. imprimatur, et per ea tantum, quia ad illas actiones tantum directe illa potentia ordinatur.'
- (103) - Cf. III, q. 63, a. 6: 'Ad idem etiam ordinatur quodammodo confirmatio.'

priesthood of Christ by the very fact that they are effects of the sacraments, produced, that is to say, by God through the instrumentality of the priestly humanity of Christ.

Sacramental grace equally participates in the priesthood of Christ in this sense (104). It participates, says John of St Thomas, as an effect produced instrumentally, effective, instrumentaliter (105). The special configuration given by the character, when produced, (to Christ) is that of a participation in an exemplar (106).

The character is further, according to St Thomas, a virtus instrumentalis, an instrumental principle, derived from the priesthood of Christ (107). St Thomas compares it to the instrumental power in the sacraments responsible for their effect:

'It should be noted that this spiritual power is instrumental; as has already been said of the power that is in the sacraments (108).

(104) - Cf. III, q. 63, a. 6, ad 1.

(105) - JOHN OF ST THOMAS, loc. cit., disp. 25, a. 3, nn. 3, 4.

(106) - Ib. : '... participative et exemplariter ...'

(107) - Cf. III, q. 63, a. 2; a. 5, ad 1; ad 2.

(108) - III, q. 63, a. 2: 'Sciendum est tamen quod haec spiritualis potentia est instrumentalis; sicut supra dictum est de virtute quae est in sacramentis.'

This comparison should not be misunderstood. St Thomas is not speaking here of the transient instrumental power communicated to the minister of the sacraments, elevating and applying him to the production of grace through the sacrament.

For the sake of clarity, let it be stated first of all that the minister does receive such a transient elevation; that he acts as a physical, instrumental cause, subordinated to the humanity of Christ and to the divine power, in producing the effect of the sacraments. This St Thomas teaches in the following question (109). Therefore the minister truly causes grace and the other effects of the sacraments as an instrument properly so called.

This is not what St Thomas is talking about here, in q. 63, as is clear from the following facts: he is speaking of the character as a permanent quality; it is this he denominates an instrumental power comparable to the vis fluens of the sacraments and there is no question of a special, transient elevation as yet; he is speaking, moreover, of the character in general and not simply of the character of orders. Precisely as permanent qualities of the

(109) - Cf. III, q. 64, a. 1.

intellect (leaving out of account the use of the minister as an efficient, instrumental cause of grace), the characters of baptism, of confirmation, and of orders, are each an instrumental power. This must be regarded as a cardinal point of St Thomas's sacramental theology. It follows that the minister is an instrument in a two-fold fashion: in virtue of his character, and in virtue of the transient elevation by which he causes grace. Evidently 'instrumental power' has not the same meaning when predicated of the character, a permanent quality, as it has when predicated of the vis fluens in virtue of which minister and sacrament cause grace. The application is analogical. Evidently, too, the effect towards which this permanent quality is formally directed is not the effect of the sacrament. It could not be, for grace is the proper effect of God and men can serve as instruments in its production only when actually elevated and applied by God in virtue of a vis fluens. (110). It is not to be denied, on the other hand,

(110) - Cf. I-II, q. 112, a. 1; ad 1; ad 2. No contrary argument may be drawn from In IV Sent., d. 4, q. 1, a. 1, ad 4 (p. 152, n. 37): 'Character est causa sacramentalis gratiae'. This must be understood in the light of St Thomas's early attribution of merely

that the ordinary minister of the sacraments is used by God as an instrument for causing grace because he has a character; but this is not the same as to say that the proper effect of the character is grace or that the character is formally directed towards the production of grace. It is when the character has produced ('instrumentally') its own proper effect that the minister receives a further, and this time strictly--so--called, instrumental elevation from God.

It is because so many commentators make the false assumption that St Thomas denominates the priestly character an instrumental power because it is formally and immediately directed to the production of the effect of the sacrament that they are perceptibly embarrassed when they have to explain why St Thomas attributed the same notion to all three characters (111).

Disagrees with so many commentators !!!

It is not with the production of grace that St Thomas

././ - dispositive causality to the sacraments in respect of grace. The causality attributed to the character according to this is moral causality, a matter of what is morally necessary; cf. ib., ad 5 (p. 152, n. 38).

(111) - Cf., e.g., BANEZ, in III, q. 63, a. 2, n. 8.

immediately connects the character; it is with the making of valid signs of faith :

'The character is directed towards those things which belong to divine worship which is a profession of faith by exterior signs' (112).

In particular, the characters of baptism and orders are directed to the making of valid sacramental signs. The implications of this, together with the reason why it means that these two characters are instrumental powers, will be examined in the following chapter in accordance with the teaching of John of St Thomas.

It is not to worship (or its consequent sanctification) in the moral order that the character is ordained; that is the object of the virtue of religion. Its function is to secure validity for the acts of the faithful in the ritual of the Church, particularly in the sacramental order where the worship of Christ himself is active (113).

From this follows St Thomas's insistence that the

(112) - III, q. 63, a. 4, ad 3: 'Character ordinatur ad ea quae sunt divini cultus qui quidem est quaedam fidei protestatio per exteriora signa.' Cf. III, q. 64, a. 1, ad 1: 'Sacerdotes illuminare dicuntur sacrum populum, non quidem gratiam infundendo, sed sacramenta gratiae tradendo'; see context.

(113) - Cf. III, q. 63, a. 4, ad 1: 'Characteri magis est ./.

character is wholly bound up with the Church as a visible society, with the means to virtue; and that it is something belonging to the sacramental order (though at the same time a real quality, physically impressed on the intellect). He says that it is a 'character' because it is a sign of deputation to Christian worship (114) - a sign that is itself known through the medium of the sacrament that gave the character (115). Because it signifies this deputation it is further a sign distinguishing the faithful from those not entitled to take part in the worship of the Church (116) and configuring them to Christ who is the author and principal actor in Christian worship (117). Besides this, the character is a sign of the grace that is given in the sacraments (118). This last idea is to be understood, in

./ - attribuendum subiectum secundum rationem actuum ad divinum cultum pertinentium, quam secundum rationem gratiae.' Also, In IV Sent., d. 4, q. 1, a. 3, sol. 3, ad 1 (p. 159, n. 73). Cf. CAJETAN, in III, q. 63, a. 4, n. 7; JOHN OF ST THOMAS, loc. cit., disp. 25, a. 2, n. 84; a. 4, n. 15; GONET, De sacramentis in genere, disp. 4, a. 3, n. 112.

(114) - Cf. III, q. 63, a. 3, ad 2; a. 1.

(115) - Cf. III, q. 63, a. 1, ad 2; a. 2, ad 4.

(116) - Cf. III, q. 63, a. 3, ad 3.

(117) - Cf. ib., ad 2.

(118) - Cf. ib.

terms of the grace that is required if the acts for which the character gives the power are to be carried fittingly, ^{out} as true acts of worship (119). Because its ultimate purpose is union with God it possesses a certain objective 'holiness' (120); but its immediate purpose is within the juridical and symbolic order. Their characters give to subject and minister the power to make a valid sacramental sign.

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- (119) - Cf. III, q. 63, a. 4, ad 1. CAJETAN, in loc. , n.3: '... Gratia est principalis sacramentorum effectus et character est effectus secundarius; et perspicue non licere attribuere sacramento conditionem characteris. Cum hoc quod character est remote et ex consequenti dispositio ad gratiam, stat quod gratia sit principalis effectus sacramenti. Tunc enim gratia non esset principalis effectus sacramenti, si solum daretur per sacramentum ut sequela ad characterem. Quae phantasia procul sit a te. Baptismus namque est principaliter "lavacrum generationis" in filios Dei, in membra Christi: et secundario impressivus characteris. Et confert gratiam ex primo principaliter: et praeter hoc habet unde conferat gratiam ex consequenti, scil. propter characterem. Ita quod character naturali ordine est effectus gratiae per quam aliquis fit Christianus formatus: prius enim natura est esse, quod spectat ad gratiam, quam posse, quod est characteris. Et cum hoc est dispositio ex consequenti ad gratiam: pro quanto ad posse donatum a Deo, comitatur antecederet vel consequenter largitio bene posse. Et bene nota quod character non ponitur dispositio ad gratiam absolute: sed character secundum rationem suae causae, scil. divinae largitatis, ponitur dispositio ad gratiam. Divinae siquidem largitatis ratio habet ut cui dat posse, dat bene posse'.
- (120) - Cf. In IV Sent., d. 4, q.1, a.3, sol.4 (p.159, n. 75).

In the Summa emerges the notion of sacrament, as sign - a concept considerably more flexible than that of remedy, favoured in the Sentences. The notion of character as directed towards the making of sacramental signs promises to lead the way to the formulation of the exact relation between opus operatum and opus operans both of minister and subject.

Conclusions

I In the Summa, St Thomas defines a sacrament as a sign of a holy thing that is for man's sanctification. The power to cause what they signify, which is a property of the sacraments of the Church, is subordinated to their status as signs.

II The humanistic approach to the sacraments implicit in this definition is a characteristic of the Summa and its principal consequence is the emphasis laid on the element of worship in the sacraments. This whole scheme of secondary and instrumental causality is not to be thought of as a closed system, but is to be placed in the context of the providence of God and the execution of the divine

decree of justification.

III The sacraments are signs of faith i) because the reality they signify is the object of faith (see ch. 3); ii) because, when used for the purpose of their institution, they are acts of external worship (see ch. 4). As acts of the virtue of religion, it is natural that their use should sanctify man. In fact, they sanctify him beyond his own strict merits.

IV The sacraments cause grace, not formally as signs, but by serving in their material reality as instruments of God, subordinated to the humanity of Christ, the Priest, in his worship.

V Even as causes the sacraments belong to worship since their effects devote man more closely to God: grace, directly; the sacramental character, indirectly, in so far as it gives power to use the sacraments (or is otherwise directed to the things that belong to the ritual of Christian worship).

VI Because of their physical and moral contact with Christ, the sacraments, as purely external signs, independently of the worship of the faithful which they

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clothe, contain the worship of Christ himself: in the Mass, his sacrifice; in the other sacraments, the fruit of his sacrifice being distributed through his worshipping humanity. The two schemes of worship in the sacraments are not contradictory. The worship of the members of the Church is subordinated to that of Christ; the benefit is for the members. The sacrament of the Eucharist, uniting men with Christ, is the unifying principle of both schemes of worship.

VII Though sacraments are administered to individuals, recourse may not be had to them except as a member of the community of the Church and supported by its faith (see ch. 3).

VIII When St Thomas denominates the sacramental character an instrumental power he is not speaking of the transient elevation by which the minister of the sacraments is used by God as an instrumental cause of grace. He is speaking rather of the character as a permanent quality, and of all three characters. The instrumentality involved, implying as it does no elevation from outside, is analogically so called. The formal effect of the characters of baptism and orders is not the effect of the sacrament (grace, etc.), but the making of valid sacramental signs. It is as a

formality

consequence of this that minister and sacrament (in its physical reality) are elevated by God and act as a strict, physical, efficient, instrumental cause of grace and the other effects of the sacrament.

CHAPTER THREE

THE INTENTION OF THE SUBJECT AND THE "OPUS OPERATUM"

Summary. Introduction. Teaching in the Commentary on the the Sentences. Teaching in the Summa theologiae. Cajetan and his opponents on the necessity of the subject's intention. The essence of the sacrament. The faith of the Church as a constituent of the sacrament. Variations in the intention. The baptismal character. A 'passive power'. An 'instrumental power'. Notes on certain of the sacraments. Notion of opus operatum. Conclusions.

It is the teaching of the Church that, in the measure that it is possible, the subject must have an intention of receiving a sacrament, under pain of invalid reception. The purpose of this chapter is to investigate in the light of St Thomas's teaching the precise ontological connection between this intention and the sacrament. It will be maintained that in virtue of his intention and (in the sacraments other than baptism) his baptismal character the subject intervenes in the sacrament as a material instrumental cause - a mode of causality that is to be found only in the sacraments which are not merely efficient causes but also, and primarily, signs of faith.

No such explicit conclusion is to be found in St

Thomas; but it is, as it appears, indicated in his teaching that the character is a participation in the priest^ehood of Christ and as such reducible to the category of instrumental power. The Thomistic commentators, with one exception, make little attempt to explain the instrumentality of the baptismal character. The exception is John of St Thomas who developed so fully the symbolic concept of the sacraments. It is in dependence on the notion that a sacrament is a sign, and therefore in dependence on the first principle of St Thomas's sacramental theology, that he explains the character. Before developing this line of thought an examination must be made of the explicit teaching of St Thomas on the part played by the subject in the sacraments.

Commentary on the Sentences

In the preliminary discussion on the sacraments in general no question or article is devoted to analysing the acts of the subject in relation to the sacrament. This is a matter that St Thomas reserves for treatment when he is dealing with those sacraments that are perfected only when they are used. The article on the constitution of the sacraments speaks of 'use' and its relation to the

essence of the sacrament; but it is clear from the context that it is question of administration (1).

More precise ideas are formulated in the discussion on baptism. Distinguishing two effects of the sacrament, grace and the character, St Thomas says that, although the second is given whether or not the will of the subject is disposed for the first, even it demands 'some desire of receiving the sacrament' (2) . It is to be noticed that, in conformity with the outlook of the Sentences, it is the connotation of causality that here predominates in the notion of sacrament and it is in this framework that the matter is solved. The same immediate recourse to the demands of causality as a principle of solution is to be found in sol. 2 of this article and in the article on the constitution of the sacrament (3).

(1) - In IV Sent., d. 1, q. 1, a.3, ad 2 (p. 26, n. 100).

(2) - In IV Sent., d. 4, q. 3, a. 2, sol. 1 (p.187, n.224):
'Duplex est effectus baptismi. Primus qui est res et sacramentum, scil., character. Et quia character non imprimitur ad praeeparandam voluntatem ut aliquid bene fiat cum non sit habitus sed potentia ... ideo hunc effectum voluntatis indispositio non impedit, dummodo aliqualis sit voluntas sacramentum recipiendi.'

(3) - In IV Sent., d. 1, q. 1, a. 3, ad 1 (p. 25, n. 99);
op. ib., d. 2, q. 1, a. 1, sol. 1 (pp. 77, 78).

The part played by this desire of receiving the sacrament is formulated explicitly when the question is answered: Whether an intention or act of will is required in the subject of this sacrament :

'In baptism the subject receives two things, the sacrament itself, and the effect of the sacrament. But for receiving these two things there is no need for the intervention of any causality on the part of the recipient. Nothing more is required than the removal of any obstacles; obstacles, that is to say, which consist in opposition of the will to either of the two things mentioned' (4).

The same teaching is repeated in positive terms in the following article :

'The soul cannot be submitted to anything unless it be willing. The purpose of the act of will, the intention, is therefore that man should submit himself to the sacrament; but the purpose of faith is that he should submit himself as he ought. Consequently, faith is required only for the reception of the grace of the sacrament, but the intention is required for the reception of the sacrament itself' (5).

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- (4) - In IV Sent., d. 6, q. 1, a. 2, sol. 3 (pp. 238, 239):
 'In baptismo baptizatus duo recipit, scilicet sacramentum, et rem sacramenti. Sed ad haec duo recipienda non requiritur aliquid causans ex parte recipientis, sed solum impedimentum removens; quod quidem impedimentum nihil aliud est quam voluntas contraria alteri praedictorum.'
- (5) - In IV Sent., d. 6, q. 1, a. 3, sol. 1, ad 3 (p. 241, n. 92): 'Anima non potest alicui subijci invita. Et ideo voluntas seu intentio facit ad hoc quod homo se
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What degree of intention - actual, habitual or (as modern terminology has it) virtual - is required of subjects in various states of consciousness is a psychological problem that St Thomas has already discussed when explaining how children and others who have not the use of reason can receive the effects of baptism (6). His teaching does not differ from that given later in the Summa.

St Thomas formulates the principle that governs his conclusions on the part played by the subject in the sacraments when he deals with penance:

'Certain of the remedies used for bodily sickness require no action on the part of the patient but consist in submitting to the curative - for example, surgery or poulticing - while others consist in the exercise of the patient - for example, the taking of a cure. In just the same way certain of the sacraments require no act on the part of the subject so far as the substance of the ~~subject so far as the substance of the~~ sacrament is concerned, unless it be per accidens, for removing obstacles (as is clear in baptism and confirmation and the like); others require essentially and per se an act of the subject for the essence of the sacrament (as is clear in penance and marriage). Thus in those sacraments

./ - sacramento subjiat; sed fides facit ad hoc quod debito modo se subjiat. Unde fides requiritur tantum ad receptionem rei sacramenti, sed intentio ad perceptionem sacramenti simpliciter.' - For extreme unction, see ib., d. 23, q. 1, a. 4, sol.2, ad.1
 (6) - In IV Sent., d. 4, q. 3, a. 1 (pp. 180 f.).

that are performed without any act of ours, it is the matter that causes and signifies, in the fashion of a medicament externally applied. But in those sacraments which demand our acts, there is no such matter; instead it is the external actions themselves that now take the place of the matter in the other sacraments' (7)

In this respect reception of the Eucharist is distinguished from baptism in that the former demands faith:

'For receiving baptism sacramentally nothing more is required of the subject but that he submit himself to the action of the Church, with the intention of receiving what she administers, even though, on occasion, he may believe that she is doing nothing. But the person who receives the Eucharist is not simply a receptacle or passive subject; he is also an agent because he eats. Consequently

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- (7) - In IV Sent., d. 14, q. 1, a. 1, sol. 1, ad 1 (p. 584, nn. 39,40): "Sicut in corporalibus medicinis quaedam sunt quae consistunt in sola passione vel receptione curati, ut sectio vulneris vel appositio emplastri; quaedam vero quae consistunt in actu laborantis, sicut curationes et huiusmodi; ita etiam in sacramentis quaedam non requirunt actum ejus qui sanctificatur quantum ad substantiam sacramenti, nisi per accidens, sicut removens prohibens: sicut patet in baptismo et confirmatione et huiusmodi; quaedam autem requirunt essentialiter et per se actum ejus qui sacramentum recipit, ad essentiam sacramenti: ut patet in poenitentia et matrimonio. In illis ergo sacramentis quae sine actu nostro complentur, est materia quae causat et significat, quasi medicina exterius appositum'. Cf. ib., d. 17, q. 3, a. 3, sol. 4 (p. 905, n. 446), and d. 34, q. un., a. 1, ad 1 (concerning matrimony).

if he is to eat the Eucharist sacramentally, it is required that he use the sacrament as a sacrament' (8).

This means that, though the true Body of Christ is eaten by all who receive the sacrament, only a believer (who has the other qualifications demanded) can use it as a sacrament. It should be observed, however, that there is not an exact parallel between reception of baptism and Communion since, as St. Thomas observes, 'the perfection of the other sacraments consists in use ... the perfection of (the Eucharist) consists in the consecration of the matter' (9). Consequently, what St Thomas calls 'sacramental eating' corresponds to fruitful reception of baptism rather than to reception of the sacrament as such. Nevertheless, it is clear from what St Thomas says here that the Eucharist cannot be classed as a 'remedy externally applied'.

(8) - In IV Sent., d. 9, a. 2, sol. 2, ad 2 (p. 370, n. 58):

'Ad hoc quod aliquis recipiat sacramentaliter baptismum, non exigitur nisi quod subjiciat se actioni Ecclesiae, ut scilicet intendat recipere quidquid illa facit, quamvis quandoque credat illam nihil facere; sed percipiens eucharistiam non solum se habet ut recipiens seu patiens, sed etiam ut agens, inquantum manducat; ideo ad hoc quod sacramentaliter manducet, oportet quod ipsemet utatur sacramento ut sacramento.'

(9) - In IV Sent., d. 9, a. 1, sol. 3, ad 2 (p. 365, n. 30):
'Perfectio aliorum sacramentorum in ipso uso consistit... sed perfectio hujus sacramenti in ipsa materiae consecratione consistit.'

This is an indication that the medical parallel must not be applied too rigidly as though some sacraments excluded all acts of the subject.

What is said in these places about the part played by the subject remains unrelated, at least explicitly, to the suggestions already put forward by St Thomas about the function of the character of baptism which is said to deputise its hearer to 'participate in all spiritual receptions' (10).

A hint of a wider frame of reference for solving sacramental problems than that of the causality exercised by the sacraments is given when faith is stated to play a rôle in the sacraments preliminary to causality:

'In the sacraments it is primarily faith that is operative [and not any of the other virtues; see objection] , for through it the sacraments are in a certain fashion connected with their principal cause and also with the recipient' (11)

In contrast to this the faith and hope of the subject are said to 'have nothing to do' with the sacrament itself, though they can either promote or impede the effect (12).

(10) - In IV Sent., d. 7, q. 2, a. 1, sol. 1 (p.280, n.104):

'... particeps omnis spiritualis receptionis ...'.

(11) - In IV Sent., d. 4, q. 3, a. 2, sol. 2, ad 2 (p. 188, n. 235): 'In sacramentis praecipue fides operatur,

per quam sacramenta quodammodo continuantur suae causae principaliter agenti et etiam ipsi recipienti'.

(12) - Cf. In IV Sent., d.2, q.2, a.4 (p. 101, n. 128).

It is the faith of the Church that establishes the connection between sacrament and divine cause by 'relating the instrument to the principal cause and the sign to the thing signified' (13). In the Sentences there is no suggestion that the subject as such plays any part here.

In the Sentences, as appears from all this, St Thomas reduces the participation of the subject to the minim^m: for the majority of the sacraments it involves nothing more than an intention of reception which is a removens prohibens; in penance and matrimony it enters the essence of the sacrament. Given the understanding of the sacraments St Thomas defends in the Sentences no other teaching would be possible. He looks on them merely as causes of the sacramental characters and of grace - hence his division of them into two kinds of remedies. If they are also signs, as he admits they are, they are signs precisely of causes and of what is to be caused. If this view is taken of the sacraments it is clear that, with the exception of those that are obviously based on a human

(13) - In IV Sent., d. 1, q. 1, a. 4, sol. 3 (p. 36, n.151):
 'Huic autem causae (Deo) continuatur sacramentum per fidem Ecclesiae quae instrumentum refert ad principalem causam et signum ad signatum.'

action, they will be thought of as requiring nothing more of the subject than the removal of obstacles to their action. The possibility of a wider view of the whole sacramental ceremony is only touched upon in the Sentences when the rôle of faith is mentioned. This is an idea that will be developed in the Summa where St Thomas brings to the foreground the idea of a cultural sign of faith.

A further hint of a more strictly sacramental approach is to be found in the Sentences where St Thomas explains why orders may be given only to a man or boy, and extreme unction only to a sick person. There are certain requirements on the part of the subject if the sacrament is to be validly received :

'Hence, even if a woman went through all the ceremonies of ordination, she would not receive orders; for since a sacrament is a sign there is demanded for its administration, not only the effect, but the signification of the effect; just as for extreme unction the subject must be sick so that the sign of one who needs cure may be complete. Since, therefore, the state of pre-eminence cannot be signified in female sex, it being the state of subjection, a woman cannot receive the sacrament of orders' (14).

(14) - In IV Sent., d. 25, q. 2, a. 1, sol. 1: 'Unde et si mulieri exhibeantur omnia quae in ordinibus fiunt, ordinem non suscipit, quia cum sacramentum sit signum in his quae in sacramento aguntur requiritur non solum res, sed significatio rei: sicut dictum

When an objector tries to argue on lines parallel to these that the irregularity of 'bigamy' cannot be dispensed since its absence is necessary for receiving the sacrament of orders, St Thomas makes a distinction. He admits that freedom from such an impediment is signified by the sacrament. However,

'not every signification is of the essence of the sacrament, but only that one which pertains to the office of the sacrament' (15).

This is a distinction equivalent to that between requirements for validity and for liceity in ordination.

Summa theologiae

Again in the Summa the most significant text is that which compares penance with the other sacraments (16).

In this article, written only a short time before his

././ - est quod in extrema unctione exigitur quod sit infirmus, ut significetur curatione indigens. Cum ergo in sexu femineo non possit significari aliqua eminentia gradus, quia mulier statum subiectionis habet, ideo non potest ordinis sacramentum suscipere.'

(15) - In IV Sent., d. 27, q. 3, a. 3, ad 3: 'Non quaelibet significatio est de essentia sacramenti [cf. Suppl., q.66, a.5, ad 3, Leonine ed.] sed tantum illa quae pertinet ad officium sacramenti.'

(16) - III, q. 84, a. 1.

death, St Thomas uses again the distinction between medicines externally applied and cures that depend on the patient's own resources, but he is careful to avoid any appearance of a mechanistic conception of sacraments that belong to the former category.

The quotation from Gregory at the beginning of the article indicates once more St. Thomas's awareness in his later years of the complexity of the sacraments and his realization of the inadequacy of the category of cause to deal with them :

'A sacrament consists in a ritual action which is carried out in such a way that we receive, under the form of a sign, something belonging to holiness' (17).

The reply to the first objection, again in reference to a statement of Gregory, explains the broad interpretation to be placed on the idea of 'the material element' (res corporales) in the sacramental sign. It includes, besides the water of baptism and the chrism of confirmation, the external actions of the subject in penance. A material object, goes on St. Thomas, is used in those sacraments

(17) - Loc. cit.: 'Sacramentum est in aliqua celebratione, cum res gesta ita fit ut aliquid significative accipiamus quod sancte accipiendum est.'

'in which an exceptional grace is given, surpassing altogether the proportion of any human act'. This is the case in baptism, confirmation, and extreme unction. It is at this point that St Thomas makes an admission that, for all its caution, goes clearly beyond the teaching of the Sentences:

'Wherefore, if there are any human acts in these sacraments, they are not the essential matter of the sacrament, but are dispositions for the sacrament. On the other hand, in those sacraments whose effect corresponds to some human acts, the human acts themselves take the place of matter, as in the case of penance and matrimony' (18).

From this very summary text one thing at least is clear. Although the possibility is allowed of acts of the subject being 'in' the sacraments of baptism, confirmation and extreme unction, these acts are said not to belong to the matter of the sacrament. The function assigned to them is that of dispositions 'for' the sacrament. It is not at once apparent how an act can at the same time be 'in' a sacrament and be a disposition for the sacrament.

(18) - Loc. cit., ad 1: 'Unde si qui actus humani sunt in talibus sacramentis, non sunt de essentia materiae sacramentorum, sed dispositive se habent ad sacramenta. In illis autem sacramentis quae habent effectum correspondentem humanis actibus, ipsi actus humani sensibiles sunt loco materiae; ut accidit in poenitentia et matrimonio.'

The supposition must be that 'sacrament' is used in two different senses. In this connection the emphasis of the text should be noted. It is on signification, and specifically on the signification of the mode of causality of grace. The matter of a given sacrament is an external action of the subject or a material object according as the effect of the sacrament corresponds or not to the internal acts of the subject. In the second case the ceremony signifies primarily the giving of grace from outside the subject; the stress is laid on its gratuitousness. In the first case the sacrament emphasises man's necessary cooperation. This is all on the level of signification. In both cases, on the ontological level, grace is from without and is gratuitous; and in both cases man must cooperate in the measure he is able (19). These are general principles that cannot be laid aside. There is nothing to prevent the cooperation of the subject being signified by the sacramental action even of baptism, confirmation

(19) - Cf. III, q. 39, a. 5: 'In baptismo Christi ea demonstrari debuerunt quae pertinent ad efficaciam nostri baptismi. Circa quam tria sunt considerata. Primo quidem, principalis virtus ex qua baptismus efficaciam habet: quae quidem est virtus caelestis ... Secundo, operatur ad efficaciam baptismi fides Ecclesiae et eius qui baptizatur ...'

and extreme unction; just as, conversely, the gift of grace is signified in penance by the words of the minister. In this sense the acts of the subject may be said to be 'in' the sacrament, that is, in the sacramental sign of administration and reception. When the sacrament is considered strictly as a cause of grace, however, the subject's acts, where they are not actually the matter of the sacrament, can be thought of only as 'dispositions for the sacrament', dispositions, that is to say, for the causality of the sacrament. So much, it may be said, is contained in the text of St Thomas seen against the background of his theology of sacramental symbolism.

It is to be observed that in admitting the possibility of the subject's acts being 'in' the sacrament, St Thomas makes no distinction comparable to that used by theologians concerned with the practical administration of the sacraments between 'conditions' required in the subject for valid, and those required for fruitful, reception of the sacraments. Taking for granted validity, he considers the sacrament as a sign of faith of one in the proper dispositions. The like point of view is illustrated in what he says of baptism :

'By the fact that a man offers himself to be cleansed by baptism, he signifies that he is disposed for interior cleansing' (20).
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In his discussion of the constitution of baptism, St Thomas is more precise. He distinguishes sacramentum tantum, res et sacramentum and res tantum, and explains the first in this way :

'That which is "sacrament only" is something visible and outward; the sign, namely, of the inward effect; for such is the very nature of the sacrament' (21).

Into this exterior sign he now introduces the subject.

Hugh of St Victor seems to say that baptism is water; but this opinion is not true,

'for, since the sacraments of the New Law effect a certain sanctification, there the sacrament is completed where sanctification is completed. Now, sanctification is not completed in water; but a certain sanctifying, instrumental virtue, not permanent but transient, passes from the water, in which it is, into man who is the subject of true sanctification. Consequently the sacrament is not completed in the very

(20) - III. q. 68, a. 4: 'Ex hoc autem quod aliquis lavandum se praebet per baptismum, significatur quod se disponat ad interiorem ablutionem.'

(21) - III, q. 66, a. 1: 'Sacramentum autem tantum est aliquid visibile exterius apparens, quod scilicet est signum interioris effectus; hoc enim pertinet ad rationem sacramenti.'

water, but in applying the water to man,
that is, in the washing' (22)

In reading this text the nuances of the word 'sacrament' for St Thomas and the immediate context must not be forgotten. An appeal is made to the nature of the production of grace by the sacrament in order to decide what elements are to belong to the external sign (sacramentum tantum). Man is the subject of the sacrament's causality; therefore, the sign of his sanctification must be not merely water but water in the act of washing man (23).

- (22) - Ib.: 'Cum enim sacramenta novae legis sanctificationem quandam operentur, ibi perficitur sacramentum ubi perficitur sanctificatio. In aqua autem non perficitur sanctificatio: sed est ibi quaedam sanctificationis virtus instrumentalis, non permanens, sed fluens in hominem, qui est verae sanctificationis subiectum. Et ideo sacramentum non perficitur in ipsa aqua, sed in applicatione aquae ad hominem, quae est ablutio.' Cp. In IV Sent., d.3, a.1, sol. 1, ad 2 (p. 113, n. 20)
- (23) - The same idea is to be found in III, q. 66, a. 10: 'De necessitate quidem sacramenti est et forma, quae designat principalem causam sacramenti, et minister, qui est causa instrumentalis, et usus materiae, scilicet ablutio in aqua, quae designat principalem sacramenti effectum'; De forma absolutionis poenitentiae sacramentalis: 'In baptismo etiam verba prolata super aquam tantum non faciunt sacramentum sed super aquam adhibitam baptizato, quod totum est loco materiae' (Opusc. theol., Marietti, 1954, vol. I, pp. 169 f.; n. 708); In I ad Cor., c. 11, lect. 5 (660); De Ver., q.27, a. 4, ad 4; ib., ad 17: 'Actio naturalis materialis instrumenti adiuvat ad effectum

So far nothing more has been said about the part played by the subject in the sacramental sign that could not be satisfied by mere physical submission to the action of the minister; but the teaching of the Church shows that more is needed; and St Thomas modifies accordingly his theology. Already he has in the First Quodlibet :

'In baptism something is required on the part of the minister, namely, that he pour the water and utter the words, and something is required on the part of the subject, namely, that he form an intention and that he be washed' (24).

The intention required of the subject in baptism is discussed in III, q. 68, aa. 7 and 8 (25). In the corpus of a. 7 St Thomas accounts for the necessity of this intention by indicating the obligations undertaken in baptism. The new form of life that they involve must be accepted willingly; and consequently the ceremony that

./ - sacramenti, in quantum per eam sacramentum suscipienti applicatur, et in quantum sacramenti significatio per actionem praedictam completur, sicut significatio baptismi per ablutionem'.

(24) - Qdl. I, q. 6, a. 1: '... in baptismo requiritur aliquid ex parte ministri, scilicet ut abluat et proferat, et aliquid ex parte suscipientis sacramentum, ut scilicet intendat et abluatur.'

(25) - Cf. also III, q. 69, a. 9, Utrum fictio impediat effectum baptismi.

initiates a person into that life must be the object of an act of will, an intention. The subject may be the 'patient' so far as justification goes, but he must adopt this position willingly (26). A. 8 deals more precisely with the amount of knowledge required for making this intention. St. Thomas distinguishes between what is demanded for receiving the character and what is demanded for receiving grace - this is a distinction between requirements for validity and those for fruitfulness. For grace, faith is necessary, since without faith there can be no justification. On the other hand, for the character:

'true faith is not necessarily required in the subject for baptism, just as true faith is not required in the minister; provided that all the other requirements for the sacrament are present' (27).

When faith is lacking, goes on St Thomas,

(26) - III, q. 68, a. 7, ad 1: 'In justificatione quae fit per baptismum non est passio coacta, sed voluntaria.'

(27) - III, q. 68, a. 8: 'Alio modo requiritur aliquid ex necessitate ad baptismum, sine quo character baptismi imprimi non potest. Et sic recta fides baptizati non requiritur ex necessitate ad baptismum, sicut nec recta fides baptizantis: dummodo adsint cetera quae sunt de necessitate sacramenti.'

'it is sufficient for receiving the sacrament to have a general intention of receiving baptism as Christ instituted it and as the Church administers it' (28).

The close parallel between the object of the subject's intention and that of the minister's is to be noted. The minister's intention is required to direct the sacramental action to a determined purpose (29). It is not however necessary that the minister believe in that purpose, but simply that he place his actions at the service of the Church:

'Therefore he is required to make an intention of subordinating himself to the principal agent; so that he intends to do what Christ and the Church do' (30).

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- (28) - Ib., ad 3: 'Sufficit ad perceptionem sacramenti generalis intentio qua intendit suscipere baptismum sicut Christus instituit, et sicut Ecclesia tradit.'
- (29) - Cf. III, q. 64, a. 8: 'Ea quae in sacramentis aguntur possunt diversimode agi: sicut ablutio aquae, quae fit in baptismo, potest ordinari et ad munditiam corporalem, et ad sanitatem corporalem, et ad ludum, et ad multa alia huiusmodi. Et ideo oportet quod determinetur ad unum, id est ad sacramentalem effectum, per intentionem abluentis.'
- (30) - Ib., ad 1: 'Ideo requiritur eius intentio, qua se subiiciat principali agenti: ut scilicet intendat facere quod facit Christus et Ecclesia.'

The cooperation of minister and subject in completing the sacramental sign and thus giving effect to the intention of the Church is explicitly referred to in the same article:

'In the words uttered (by the minister) the intention of the Church is expressed; and this suffices for completing the sacrament, unless the contrary be outwardly expressed on the part of either the minister or the recipient of the sacrament' (31)

If the subject has not placed an intention baptism must be administered again (32). Though children are clearly incapable of such an intention, St Thomas will not dispense the requirement in their case. The intention is made for them, he says, by those who offer them to be baptised (33) and who, in this, act on behalf of the Church (34).

(31) - Ib., ad 2: 'In verbis autem quae proferuntur, exprimitur intentio Ecclesiae; quae sufficit ad perfectionem sacramenti, nisi contrarium exterius exprimatur ex parte ministri et recipientis sacramentum.'

(32) - Cf. III, q. 68, a. 7, ad 2.

(33) - Cf. III, q. 68, a. 9, ad 1.

(34) - Cf. ib., ad 2. CAJETAN, in III, q. 68, a. 7, n. 7, argues inversely: since the child forms no intention for baptism, neither, per se, need an adult. This conclusion is explicitly rejected by all the principal succeeding commentators. See below.

Besides the intention there is another requirement for the reception of all the sacraments except baptism. This is the baptismal character, an instrumental power, directed, as has been seen, towards validity of the sacrament. Of confirmation St Thomas says :

'The character of confirmation of necessity supposes the baptismal character: so that, in effect, if one who is not baptized were to be confirmed, he would receive nothing, but would have to be confirmed again after receiving baptism' (35)

St Thomas does not explicitly correlate the two requirements in the subject. He accounts for the necessity of the character for confirmation by reference to the analogy of birth and growth which he uses to distinguish the first two sacraments.

The study devoted in the Summa to the subject of the sacraments, it will be seen from what has been said, is considerably more suggestive than that of the Sentences. It is not that St Thomas retracts or contradicts anything that he said in the earlier work; but he has discovered

(35) - III. q. 72, a. 6: 'Character confirmationis ex necessitate praesupponit characterem baptismalem: ita scilicet quod si aliquis non baptizatus confirmaretur, nihil reciperet, sed oporteret ipsum iterato confirmari post baptismum.'

the riches of a new dimension in the sacraments. He no longer feels himself constrained to limit the participation of the subject to that of removens prohibens. The sacraments are integral parts of human worship and in the realm of signification the subject may be allowed a part that can be said to be 'in' the sacrament, always without prejudice to the special part played by the minister and the matter and form. Nor is this a purely physical subjection to the action of the sacrament: it demands willing cooperation, without which the sacrament itself is void. In a baptized member of the Church it involves a physical power in the subject's intellect, a power that is instrumental. In the context of causality of grace, however (which is 'posterior in nature' to signification), it is the objective elements of the sacrament that are active; the subject's part is 'dispositive'. St Thomas does not explain in detail what this implies; but it is clearly more positive than the solution proposed in the Sentences.

An attempt must now be made to draw out the implications of St Thomas's teaching by interpreting in the light of his key sacramental concepts some of his apparently uncorrelated conclusions and thus discovering

their hidden harmony.

Most of the commentators devote their discussion of the subject's intention to refuting an opinion put forward by Cardinal Cajetan. They are concerned with showing the faults in the arguments on which this opinion is based and it is usually only in the briefest fashion that they say what the intention does. This debate serves to indicate the way most theologians think about the matter.

Cajetan and his opponents on the necessity of the subject's intention.

The practice in the Church of baptising children, together with a letter sent by Pope Innocent III to the Bishop of Arles in 1201 dealing with the consent required for receiving baptism (36), raise certain problems concerning the necessity and the rôle of the subject's intention.

Cajetan, with this material, takes up the extreme position that, 'speaking per se, an intention or act of will is not required of the subject of baptism'. It is

(36) - INNOCENT III, Ep. Maiores Ecclesiae causas; cf. Denz. 410, 411.

required, as St Thomas teaches in the Sentences, only as a removens prohibens to remove a contrary will should it have ever existed (37). He gives two reasons for this. The first is based on the authority of Innocent III ('The sacramental action gives the character since it finds no obstacle in the will'). What is at issue here is a question of psychology, namely: what constitutes an obstacle, obex, in the will; and on these terms Cajetan's opinion is discussed and refuted by later Thomists. Their arguments will be considered later.

Cajetan's second reason is a strictly sacramental one. He argues that what is not necessary in one subject of baptism is not necessary for the sacrament, speaking per se, in any subject; however, an intention is not necessary in a child; therefore, it is not per se necessary for the sacrament. Nothing more is required than the absence of an obstacle in the will. He supports the minor of the argument by denying an objection. The intention of the child's parents provides no disposition; it merely procures the approach of patient to agent. He

(37) - CAJETAN, in III, q. 68, a. 7, n. 7: 'Dicendum mihi videtur quod non exigitur intentio seu voluntas ex parte baptizantis'.

gives an example of a child presented for baptism by Jewish parents for some human motive. The Church, he asserts, does not intend that such a child should receive baptism; yet, in fact, the sacrament is valid. As for the text of St Thomas, in the article he is commenting on where an intention is said to be necessary, Cajetan declares :

'This is to be understood of what always in fact happens in adults. Such a subject will never be found neutral, but he will either intend or refuse baptism, implicitly or explicitly, etc. Hence it is true to say that "if an intention of receiving the sacrament is lacking in an adult, he would have to be re-baptized" for the lack of intention would be attached to a contrary intention' (38)

The Salmanticenses oppose Cajetan, maintaining that precisely for the validity of the sacrament there is required an intention on the part of the subject (39).

(38) - CAJETAN, loc. cit., n. 10: 'Quod autem hic dixit, intelligendum est secundum id quod semper de facto invenitur in adultis; scil. quod non invenitur neuter, sed aut habet velle aut nolle respectu baptismi, implicite vel explicite, etc. Et propterea verificatur quod, "si in adulto deesset intentio suscipiendi sacramentum esset rebaptizandus"; defectus enim intentionis contrariam haberet annexam intentionem.'

(39) - SALMANTICENSES, Cursus theologicus, tr. 22, disp.8, dub. 1.

This they characterize as the common opinion of theologians (40) and as the teaching of St Thomas in the Summa, if not in the Sentences (41). It is to be noted that, whereas Cajetan confines his remarks to the sacrament of baptism (though his principles can be applied to other sacraments), the Salmanticenses speak in general terms.

They reply to Cajetan's argument based on child baptism that, though the requirements on the part of the sacrament itself are always the same, this is not true of what is required of the subject,

'for it often happens that what is not required on the part of one subject is called for on the part of another on account of diverse dispositions or states of the subjects' (42)

Consequently, just as children are justified without any act on their part whereas adults must freely consent, so the requirements for validity of sacraments differ accord-

(40) - Ib., n. 8.

(41) - Ib., n. 11.

(42) - Ib., '... quia plerumque contingit id quod ex parte unius subjecti non requiritur desiderari ex parte alterius ob diversas subjectorum dispositiones aut modos se habendi.'

ing to the powers of the subjects (43).

The Salmanticenses are careful to note that the intention of the subject does not intervene in the sacrament 'actively, as an efficient cause removing original sin or causing grace'. They say that it 'intervenes dispositively' in relation to the validity and effect of the sacrament; and this they appear to understand in the sense of removens prohibens (44).

Billuart who also opposes Cajetan holds that the intention is a conditio sine qua non (45). This is the common teaching of manualists (46).

- (43) - Cf. ib. : 'Quoniam parvuli sunt incapaces talis consensus [ad valorem sacramentorum], adulti vero sunt capaces illius: unde oportet quod habeant diversam applicationem ad sacramenta: sicut ob idem motivum diverso modo justificantur.'
- (44) - ib.: 'Sicut ille motus [voluntatis] concurrit dispositive excludendo oppositam voluntatem, et carentiam debitae intentionis, sic etiam dispositive concurrit tam ad valorem, quam ad effectum sacramenti.'
- (45) - BILLUART, Summa, diss. 6, a. 1. Replying to Cajetan's argument: 'Quod est necessarium in uno ad substantiam sacramenti est necessarium in omnibus; ergo. Resp. dist. ant. Quod est necessarium ut quid essenziale, conc.; quod est necessarium ut dispositio subjecti tantum et conditio sine qua non, subdistinguo: si subjectum sit capax illius, conc.; si sit incapax ut sunt pueri et amentes, neg. ... Non dicimus intentionem subjecti requiri essentialiter ad sacramentum, sed tantum ut conditionem ex parte subjecti.'
- (46) - E.g. V. ZUBIZARRETA, O. Carm., Theologia dogmatico-scholastica, vol. 4, De sacramentis (ed. 3, Bilbao, ./.).

It appears, however, that these theologians, though they correctly reject Cajetan's arguments, do not react sufficiently against his position. Adequately though it may respond to the broad requirements of the defined doctrine of the Church, their conclusion with its single-minded concentration on essentials sweeps aside the whole delicate system of humanistic sacramentalism constructed by St Thomas. It is a conclusion that depends, not on the first principle of St. Thomas's sacramental theology, but on a false interpretation of that principle which gives to it a formally non-sacramental sense. Those theologians who teach it are concerned only with the fact that the sacraments cause grace, whatever be the mode of causality they defend. They leave out of consideration the fact that the sacraments are primarily (by a primacy of nature) signs (47). On this basic, strictly sacramental level the participation of the

./.. - 1939), n. 175; E. BILLOT, S.J., De Ecclesiae Sacramentis, t. 1, q. 64, th. 19 (Rome, 1893).

(47) - Even Billot is concerned with the causality of the sacraments. His theology of sign does not involve the subject in the same way as does St Thomas's concept of signs of worship.

subject is more than a condition. The very idea of condition - something that is required for a cause to operate, while not itself entering into the causality - belongs to the order of efficient causality, not to that of signification, nor to that of efficient causality based on signification. These assertions must be explained.

The essence of the sacrament

A sacrament may be considered in its essential qualities as ^{an} active principle, signifying the giving of grace and used as a physical instrument by God in effecting what it signifies. As such it abstracts from the requirements for its valid reception which vary according to the condition of the individual subject. Its essential parts are its matter and form which are united by the intention of the minister. Hence result the three traditional requirements for completing the sacrament. In this connection St Thomas's teaching in the short work, De articulis fidei et Ecclesiae sacramentis (48) has a particular interest because of

(48) - Opusc. theol., Marietti, 1954, vol. I, pp. 139 f.
 Date: 1261-1268 (cf. ib. pp. 139, 140).

its use by the Council of Florence in drawing up the Decree for the Armenians. The Council summarizes St Thomas and states :

'All these sacraments are made up of three elements, namely, things as matter, words as form, and the person of the minister who administers the sacrament with the intention of doing what the Church does. If any of these elements is lacking, the sacrament is not completed' (49)

It is to be noted that in the use of this hylomorphic terminology there is question of an analogy taken from the physical order. It is not to be understood in a physical sense of the sacraments but in terms of signification. The form further determines the natural symbolism of the matter and gives it its specifically Christian and sacramental signification (50).

(49) - Cf. Denz. 695: 'Haec omnia sacramenta tribus perficiuntur, videlicet rebus tamquam materia, verbis tamquam forma, et persona ministri conferentis sacramentum cum intentione faciendi quod facit Ecclesia; quorum si aliquod desit, non perficitur sacramentum.' Cf. 22nd. question proposed to Wycliffites and Hussites in the Bull, Inter cunctas, 22 Feb., 1418 (Denz. 672); Council of Trent, sess. 14 (Denz. 895): '... materia et forma quibus sacramenti essentia perficitur ...'; Leo XIII, Ep., Apostolicae curae, 18 Sept., 1896 (Denz. 1963): 'In ritu cuiuslibet sacramenti ... discernunt ... partem essentialem quae materia et forma appellari consuevit'.

(50) - Cf. H.E. SCHILLEBEECKX, O.P., De Sacramentele heilseconomie, Sectie II, Hoofdstuk II (pp. 355 f., esp. pp. 380-382) and Hoofdstuk III (pp. 393 f., esp. pp. 405-416).

The essence of a sacrament thus formed is what determines the particular nature of its operation and effect. This is not sufficient, however, to give concrete existence and activity to a sacrament which is perfected only when it is actually being received by a subject, that is to say, to any sacrament other than the Eucharist.

Even when considered in the abstract, according to its essence, as an active principle of grace, signifying and causing by material elements and by words, the sacrament is transcendently related to a subject. This it has in common with all action (excepting creation), which is essentially related to a subject or patient and which draws its effect from the potentiality of the subject. Thus, in the concrete, there can be no possibility of sacramental causality without a subject. This is reflected on the level of signification. The adequate sign of causality must include the application of the material elements to a subject: not water, but washing, is required for baptism (51).

Mere physical submission to the sacraments on the

(51) - Cf. III, q. 66, a. 1 and places noted in n. 23, above.

part of one who has the use of reason is not, however, enough (52). Man is a free agent and he is moved by God to accept freely the grace given him; so it is required that he freely submit himself to the action of the sacrament. If he has no intention of receiving the sacrament his external acceptance of it is not a true sign of his interior disposition. Consequently, the complete sign-action of the administration of the sacrament is not true. The sacrament such as it is performed and applied by the minister is not received by the subject. It is reduced by the fault of the subject to an unnatural state. It still signifies the salvific will of God but no longer as concretely effective for this individual subject. If, however, while not properly disposed to receive grace, the subject seriously intends to receive the sacrament, the external submission he makes is a true sign and the sacrament is actually received by him and produces whatever effects do not depend on his state of soul.

(52) - Cf. III, q. 61, a. 1, ad 1: 'Exercitatio per usum sacramentorum non est pure corporalis, sed quodammodo est spiritualis: scilicet per significationem et causalitatem.' See also places noted above, nn. 24 f.

It is the primary submission of the subject that makes the individual sacrament a practical sign of faith; and this even when the subject himself is an unbeliever. Without his intention the sacrament is not properly a sign of the faith of the Church. This idea must be examined.

The faith of the Church as a constituent of the sacrament

The faith of the Church is required for the very existence of the sacraments. This is a consequence of their nature as signs, existing, therefore, formally as relations imposed by an intelligence. Since they are practical signs and causes of sanctification they can be set up only by God (53). Thus the original imposition of signification on certain ceremonies was effected by the mind of Christ. The signs that he instituted can be recognized as such only by faith since they are supernatural. Likewise the reference of sacramental rites performed by the Church to the institution of Christ and to his salvific will can be made only by faith; and without this reference the rites cannot be sacramental,

(53) - Cf. III, q. 60, a. 5; q. 64, a. 2.

cannot, that is, exist as signs (54). The faith of the Church which imposes this relation of signification on individual ceremonies is based on the faith of the Apostles to whom Christ revealed his intention (55).

This practical act of faith is what the Church 'does' (quod facit Ecclesia) in the sacraments; and it is this that the intention of the minister serves (56) by pronouncing the form over specified matter (57).

St Thomas's insistence on the intervention of the

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- (54) - Cf. Im IV Sent., d. 1, q. 1, a. 4, sol. 3 (p. 36, n. 151): 'Principale autem et per se agens ad justificationem est Deus sicut causa efficiens, et passio Christi sicut meritoria. Huic autem causae continuatur sacramentum per fidem Ecclesiae quae instrumentum refert ad principalem causam, et signum ad signatum.' - See SCHILLEBEECKX, op. cit., pp. 379, 404 f.
- (55) - Cf. II-II, q. 174, a. 6: 'Super revelatione facta Apostolis de fide ... fundatur tota fides Ecclesiae'; III, q. 64, a. 2, ad 3: 'Apostoli et eorum successores sunt vicarii Dei quantum ad regimen Ecclesiae institutae per fidem et fidei sacramenta'; ib., ad 1.
- (56) - Cf. III, q. 64, a. 8, ad 1; ib., a. 9, ad 1: 'Potest (minister) intendere facere id quod facit Ecclesia, licet existimet illud nihil esse. Et talis intentio sufficit ad sacramentum, quia ... minister sacramenti agit in persona totius Ecclesiae, ex cuius fide suppletur id quod deest fidei ministro'; q. 67, a. 5, ad 2.
- (57) - Cf. III, q. 64, a. 8, ad 2; q. 60, a. 7, ad 3.

faith of the Church demonstrates beyond any doubt that he regards the intentions of those concerned in the sacraments as pertaining directly and immediately to the order of signification - they impose or cause the signification of an individual ceremony. Efficient causality of grace comes after this as a consequence, an entirely gratuitous complement granted by God, not essentially (though infallibly) connected with the ceremonial of the Church.

It is precisely for the perfection of the ceremonial of the Church, as applied to an individual adult, therefore for the perfection of a concrete sacramental sign, that the intention of the subject is essential. The subject must signify genuine acceptance of what the Church offers. Otherwise the sacramental is not a concrete, practical sign; it is merely a speculative sign of the divine will to save all men. Faith is not required of the subject. He simply accepts the sign of the Church's faith (58).

(58) - Cf. III, q. 68, a. 8, ad 3; In IV Sent., d. 4, q. 3, a. 2, sol. 2, ad 2 (p. 188, n. 235): 'In sacramentis praecipue fides operatur, per quam sacramenta quodammodo continuantur suae causae principaliter agenti et etiam ipsi recipienti.' The force of 'quodammodo' has already been explained; viz., directly, by way of signification; indirectly, by ./.

The willing cooperation of a subject who has the use of reason is therefore an integral part of the sacramental ceremony. Without it, those sacraments which exist only at the time of use, even though they have their essential parts, lack something required for their perfection (59). It is only when they are perfect as signs received by an individual that there is any possibility of their acting as causes.

Certain difficulties remain to be solved concerning those who are incapable of forming an intention.

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- ././ - way of efficient causality (which is to be attributed to God as agent, not to faith). It is to be observed also that if, as the Church intends, the subject does believe, his faith is assumed under the faith of the Church and thus plays a part in directing the intention of the minister.
- (59) - SCHILLEBEECKX, op. cit., appears to go too far when he asserts that without the intention of the subject the sacrament is not an action of the Church. (Cf. p. 482; 'Zonder de vrije beaming van het sacramentum kan de ritus geen symbooldaad van de Kerk zijn, daar deze symbooldaden wezenlijk sacramentele, kerkelijke handelingen zijn die aan een menselijk subject en wel op menselijke wijze worden voltrokken.') The Church authentically offers the sacrament and this is signified by the ritual.

Variations in the intention

What is required of the subject for the existence of a true sacrament (sacramentum tantum) varies according to his state of consciousness. What is essential to the sacrament is that it should signify the giving of grace to a subject. The state of the individual subject to whom the sacrament is concretely applied determines the signification of the complete sign-action. Thus the administration of baptism to a child signifies justification of an unconscious being whereas the willing submission of an adult signifies justification of a responsible human person. The dispositions of will required for valid administration of baptism are discussed by the commentators in connection with Cajetan's interpretation of Innocent III's letter. The discussion resolves itself into the purely psychological question : what constitutes an obstacle in the will to reception of a new responsibility? Though this formulation of the question reflects the pastoral concern of the Church with the administration of fruitful sacraments and the speculative preoccupation of these theologians with the efficient causality of the sacraments, the replies given to it are

valid for determining the requirements of the sacraments as signs.

The teaching of the Pope contains the following conclusions. These who accept baptism under duress, in the same way as those who accept it while feigning good dispositions, receive the character, since they are really, if conditionally, willing. On the contrary,

'a person who has never given consent, but persists in refusal, receives neither grace nor the character, since express refusal goes beyond lack of consent ... Those who are sleeping or are mentally unbalanced, if they persisted in refusal before they became unbalanced or went to sleep, do not receive the character even if water is poured on them since their resolution to refuse is understood to remain. The effect is otherwise if they were preparing for baptism and had the intention of receiving it; and so in these cases the Church administers baptism if necessity demands. Then the sacramental action gives the character since it finds no obstacle in the will' (60).

(60) - INNOCENT III, Ep. Maiores Ecclesiae causas, 1201, (Denz. 410, 411): 'Ille vero, qui nunquam consentit, sed penitus contradicit, nec rem nec characterem suscipit sacramenti, quia plus est expresse contradicere, quam minime consentire ... Dormientes autem et amentes, si prius quam amentiam incurrerent aut dormirent, in contradictione persisterent: quia in eis intelligitur contradictionis propositum perdurare, etsi fuerint sic immersi, characterem

All are agreed, including Cajetan (61), that a person with the use of reason cannot be neutral in regard to the reception of a sacrament. He will either refuse it or accept. In the second case his intention is either actual or virtual; therefore exercising a real influence over his action (62). Children and those who have always been of unbalanced mind are incapable of an intention. The difficulty concerns adults who are unconscious and those who have lost their balance of mind after coming to the use of reason. Cajetan maintains that Pope Innocent teaches that baptism can have an effect on such as these if they have never at any time explicitly refused to accept it. The absence of such refusal, he argues, constitutes an absence of obstacle to the sacrament.

The Salmanticenses refuse to accept this argument. If baptism were independent in this way of the subject's

./.. - non suscipiunt sacramenti; secus autem si prius catechumeni exsistissent et habuissent propositum baptizandi; unde tales in necessitatis articulo consuevit Ecclesia baptizare. Tunc ergo characterem sacramentalis imprimit operatio, cum obicem voluntatis contrariae non invenit obsistentem." Cf. De Ver., q. 28, a. 3, ad 2; I-II, q. 113, a. 3, ad 1.

(61) - In III, q. 68, a. 7, n. 4.

(62) - Cf. SALMANTICENSES, tr.22, disp.8, dub.1, n. 8.

consent, they reason, the Church should not deny it to those who have become of unbalanced mind after reaching the use of reason and who have not, when they were capable, consented to accept it (63). Their explanation of the practice of the Church is that

'an adult who makes no positive act of consent to the reception of the sacraments virtually refuses it and puts it away from him ... because every person who has the use of reason has the intention, at least virtually and interpretatively, that nothing shall be done concerning his person in matters of moment without his personal and positive consent' (64).

The meaning of obex is clear, they go on, from the whole of Innocent's letter.

'He does not at all mean that a neutral will, or a mere lack of contrary intention, is sufficient for validity of the sacrament; he means by "an obstacle of contrary intention" both an intention formally and positively contrary and an intention interpretatively contrary, as is to be considered the lack of consent in adults to whatever is done to their persons in matters of moment' (65).

(63) - Ib., n. 8.

(64) - Ib., n. 9: 'Adultus qui nullum positivum consensum habet circa sacramentorum susceptionem illi virtualiter contradicit et repugnat ... quia omnis homo sui compos habet saltem virtualiter et interpretative hanc voluntatem ut nihil de eius persona disponatur in rebus gravibus absque proprio et positivo eius consensu.'

(65) - Ib., n. 11: 'Innocens III satis aperte docet nost-

The Pope's use of the phrase 'contrary will' is accounted for by the particular question he has in mind, namely, forcible baptism.

From this it follows that a positive, habitual intention (in the modern sense of the term) is required of the subject who receives a sacrament in a state of unconsciousness or who is so|distracted at the moment of reception that he is not performing a human act.

Applying these psychological notions to the order of signification in the sacraments two possibilities are to be envisaged. (Baptism is taken for granted in the case of the subject of the other sacraments). The subject will be either conscious or unconscious. In the former case, if his reception of the sacrament is a human

./.. - ram et communem sententiam.... Cum ergo addit: "Tunc ergo characterem sacramentalis imprimit operatio, cum obicem voluntatis contrariae non invenit obsistentem", minime significat voluntatem neutram, aut solam carentiam voluntatis contrariae sufficere ad valorem sacramenti: sed per "obicem voluntatis contrariae" significat tam voluntatem formaliter et positive contrariam quam voluntatem interpretative contrariam, qualis censetur carentia consensus in adultis pro his quae aguntur circa eorum personas in rebus gravibus.' Cf. BILLUART, diss. 6, a. 1: He defines obex: 'non solum resistentia positiva, sed etiam dissensus negativus seu carentia consensus, ita ut ex negatione intelligenda et supponenda sit affirmatio contraria.'

act, his intention will intervene actively either actually or virtually. The sacramental sign, to be true, demands such participation. If his intention is merely habitual he is not placing a human act, and if he receives the effect of the sacrament he receives it in the same way as an unconscious person. If the subject is unconscious (or unbalanced, whether so from birth or after attaining the use of reason, or so completely distracted as not to be placing a human act) there is no question of active intervention of his intention, even supposing that he has one habitually. If he actually receives the sacrament - and one sacrament at least, matrimony, he cannot receive - it will be in the fashion of a child, ad modum pueri, that is, without any active cooperation on his part here and now (66). If the unconscious subject is a child or an imbecile from birth the sacramental sign will be true simply through physical submission. If the subject, however, is one who previously had the use of reason - whether he is now asleep, intoxicated, completely distracted or mentally unbalanced - the sacramental sign will be true

(66) - This idea is to be found in SCHILLEBEECKX, op. cit. p. 483.

only if his will habitually accepts the sacrament, since what is signified is justification of one who is unconscious and who places no obstacle in the way of the sacrament (and of sacramental grace, though falsehood as regards this element does not imperil validity). The Church has no means of knowing whether the sign is true or not, except conjecture, based more or less firmly on what she knows of the subjects previous life; but the same may be said of administration of the sacraments to those who are conscious. There is always the possibility of deception and consequent falsity in the sacramental sign.

There is therefore a whole scale of necessary participation in the sacramental signs by the subject, depending on his state of consciousness. Since the psychological truths on which this conclusion is based are acknowledged by nearly all theologians it is a matter for wonder that there is current among manualists - and it appears even in Billuart - the phrase (or some variation on it): The subject does not require an intention of the same degree as the minister (67); as though to

(67) - BILLUART, diss. 6, a. 1: 'Non requiritur tanta intentio in suscipiente ac in ministrante'. Cf. BILLOT, loc.cit.; ZUBIZARETTA, loc.cit.; D. PRUEMMER, O.P., Manuale theologiae moralis, t. III, n. 63 (ed. 11, 1953).

say that no subject need have more than an habitual intention. This is true of an unconscious or distracted subject but of no other. As much is required for conscious reception of a sacrament as is required for any human act. This would be true no matter what were the function to be assigned the intention in relation to the sacrament.

The baptismal character

A complete account according to the principles of St Thomas's theology of the rôle of the subject's intention requires the correlation of what has already been said with the teaching in the Summa on the sacramental characters, in particular that of baptism. St Thomas himself does not do this in more than very summary and indirect fashion when he indicates the cultual purpose of the character. His analysis of the subject's intention is placed in the discussion of baptism so that any reference to the activity of the character is excluded since it is this sacrament that produces the character.

St Thomas's teaching on the baptismal character is tantalizing in its omission of details. The account of it proposed by John of St Thomas appears to be the only

one that faithfully interprets its boldly drawn lines by consistent reference to the nature of sacraments as signs. It is the only one that provides a satisfying explanation for St Thomas's application of the concept of instrumental power to the character of baptism as well as to that of orders.

John of St Thomas indicates the essential interdependence of intention and character. The character itself - and this applies to all characters - has no proper action. Man is able through the character to subordinate his actions to Christ the Priest (68). Thus the character does not produce the intention of submitting to the sacrament (an act of the will) nor does it produce the act of the practical intellect by which the intention is implemented. These are produced by the bearer of the character, whether minister or subject, as a principal cause. The character gives to these acts a mode which makes them valid sacramentally and by which they serve

(68) - JOHN OF ST THOMAS, Cursus theologicus (Vivès, Paris, 1886, t. 9) disp. 25, a. 4, n. 36: 'Non ergo character habet aliquem actum proprium ... sed solum homo mediante characterē debet subordinare et conformare actus suos sacerdotie Christi.'

ministerially the priesthood of Christ (69). Thus John of St Thomas sees the character as the means by which human activity enters the sacramental order and thereby serves Christ in his priestly activity. The character of orders permits its subject to enter as an active principle, the character of baptism permits entry as a passive principle; so that minister and subject, each in his own way, serve in the sacraments as ministers and therefore instrumentally (70). As will appear below, this refers formally not to the causality of the sacraments but

(69) - Ib., n. 35: 'Quid autem sit ministerialiter concurrere et habere actus dicimus quod non est producere aliquem actum cognitionis aut volitionis, quia totum quod est in volitione aut cognitione procedere debet a causa vitali et ad modum principalis se habente, sed producere hos actus et dirigere actiones exteriores sacramentaliter et secundum subordinationem ad sacerdotium Christi.' N. 44: 'Ad id quod dicitur, an sit operativus actus vitalis interioris, dico quod neque exterioris, ^{quantum ad} substantiam et elicentiam, cum isti elicantur a subjecto ut a causa principali; sed tam interioris quam exterioris, quoad modum, seu ministerialem rationem, qua servitur sacerdotio Christi.'

(70) - Ib., disp. 25, a. 2, n. 17: 'Character est potentia competens ministris sacramentorum, ut solum ministerialiter concurrant ad illa, sive passive, sive active; potentia autem ministerialis instrumentalis est.' Cf. ib., n. 80

to their existence as signs.

The minister in virtue of his character serves as the active element in the sign; the subject in virtue of his character serves as the passive element in the sign. Activity is demanded of each if he is to serve in his respective function.

The instrumentality thus attributed to the priest by his character is not directed immediately towards the production of grace. Formally it consists in making the priest's actions valid in the sacraments, thus subordinating them to the activity of Christ; and in this it differs from the instrumentality attributed to the subject only in the function it procures for the priest (71). The fact that, according to the teaching of St Thomas, the priest is physically elevated as an instrument by God in producing the effect of the sacrament is something

(71) - Ib., disp. 25, a. 2, n. 143: 'Character non est potentia instrumentalis primo et per se ad gratiam producendam sed ad conficienda sacramenta valide et per se primo in genere sacramentali, ita quod sine illo sunt nulla.' Cf. ib., n. 123: 'Per characterem non datur activitas ad effectum sacramentorum, qui producitur instrumentaliter, sed validitas ad actus, ut non sint nulli, sed validi in genere sacramentali.'

that is to be distinguished from this primary instrumentality which is procured formally by the character and which is identical with the validity of human actions in the sacraments (72). In relation to the secondary instrumentality the priestly character and, in fact, the priest himself are evidently passive in so far as they are applied by God to the production of grace; this aspect does not concern us here. The precise function of the priestly character is to introduce the priest's actions into the liturgy to serve Christ actively; just as the function of the baptismal character is to introduce the subject's actions to serve Christ passively; in both cases the service is carried out on the level of worship, of signs of faith. (73) It is as a consequence of the validity

(72) - Cf. above, pp. 120 f.

(73) - Ib., n. 124: 'Si dicēs; ergo omnis character est potentia passiva quia non habet activitatem respectu instrumentalis concursus et motionis; respondetur quod character non datur in ordine ad instrumentalem motionem ut ad proprium actum (quia etiamsi non daretur physica motio instrumentalis adhuc daretur character) sed in ordine ad ea quae sunt protestationes divini cultus et actiones sacras exercendas et in his vel passive se habet vel active; ad operandum autem instrumentaliter semper passive se habet, sed non ad operandum ministerialiter et sacramentaliter. Quia in aliquibus configuratur Christo agendo, in aliis recipiendo.'

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given to the priest's action by his character that the priest receives the vis fluens which applies him physically to producing the effect of the sacrament (74).

The sacramental characters bring it about, therefore, that when priest and subject, acting as principal, secondary causes, perform together certain acts of worship in accordance with the prescriptions of the Church, their actions signify and consequently put into effect the divine decree of justification in respect of an individual. The moral value of the acts of worship is from the devotion of the faithful; their sacramental validity from the characters (75).

(74) - Ib., disp. 24, a. 1, n. 440: 'Minister per characterem non praebet activitatem quasi physicam ad effectus supernaturales sed voluntarie utitur hoc caractere ad hoc ut actus protestativi fidei sint vere sacramentales et valide atque in ordine ad ea quae sunt cultus Dei ministerialiter ordinentur secundum ordinem ad sacerdotiam Christi; et ex hac validitate facit sibi debitum concursum elevativum sacramenti aut ministri ad operandum supernaturalia. Cf. ib., disp. 25, a. 2, nn. 51, 122, 147.

(75) - Ib., disp. 25, a. 4, n. 22: 'Ad characterem ... pertinet ministerialiter et sacramentaliter valide exercere signa sensibilia, habentia virtutem spiritualem, et protestativa fidei Christi, in quo ei character ministrat.' Ib., a. 2, n. 146: 'Sacerdos habet se sicut minister, seu instrumentum animarum [animatum?] quod confert gratiam non solum tamquam instrumentum pure efficiens ex motione sed efficiens colendo seu faciendo ea quae sunt cultus divini, et ideo requirit

It is precisely because grace is given in the sacraments, not by bare efficient causality, but sacramentally, that is, by efficient causality based on a sign-action, that the baptismal character is needed (76). If it were merely a matter of receiving directly from God the forms of grace and the other characters the soul would of itself be disposed; but a special potency is required for receiving these effects sacramentally, that is, as a result of first participating in the sign-action the material elements of which are then physically applied by God to the efficient production of these effects (77). Hence the ambiguity

././ - potestatem qua possit facere signa protestativa cultus huiusmodi; facit autem ea quae sunt cultus non sub ratione morali, et moralis virtutis, sed sub ratione cooperatoris et ministri Christi. ... Moralitas huius cultus pertinet ad virtutem religionis.'

(76) - Ib., disp. 25, a. 2, n. 93: 'Redditur ergo per characterem baptismalem homo aptum subjectum ad sacramentaliter suscipiendum sacramenta quia suscipere sacramenta non est solum corpoream et sensibilem actionem extrinsecus applicatam suscipere quasi materialiter, sed sub ratione sacramenti formaliter.'

(77) - Ib., n. 182: 'Et licet ad recipiendum tales formas in genere entis seu accidentis sola natura animae aut potentiae sufficeret, sicut et ipsae suscipiunt characterem, tamen ad recipiendum illas ex officio et sacramentaliter (etsi physice suscipiantur) requiritur character, mediante quo valide suscipitur sacramentum et gratia sacramentalis; ideoque etiam in suscipiendo ministerialis causa est, licet in recipiendis illis in ratione entis nulla ratio ministerii attendatur.'

and the possibility of confusion: the conscious subject participates actively in the sign-action as the passive element of the sign. In other words, his activity is required if the sign-action is to have its passive element. It is in these perspectives, according to John of St Thomas, that St Thomas's description of the baptismal character as a 'passive' power is to be explained. Since a particular problem of textual interpretation arises here this point must be examined more closely.

A 'passive power'

What phrase?
 This phrase of St Thomas, in III, a. 63, a. 2, has caused a great deal of confusion in his readers. The fault, as will be seen, does not lie with him.

Taking the phrase in isolation and leaving out of consideration the whole theological fabric into which St Thomas weaves it, not a few readers of the Summa have asserted that the baptismal character is a simple, inactive power of receiving the effects of the sacraments. Why, if this were his meaning, St Thomas should not call it a disposition of the soul they do not say. Still less can they suggest any convincing reason why he should call

it instrumental. Any such material idea of the character as a passive receptacle leaves no adequate reply to Suarez's very pertinent question: Passive to what? It is hard to conceive to what form the character could be passive. The major commentators, in reply, recognize a limited force in the objection. They admit that the character is not itself passive to grace which is received in the essence of the soul, and say that for it to be called passive - at least in a wide sense - it is sufficient that it make the subject able to receive grace (78).

(78) - Cf. SALMANTICENSES, tr. 22, disp. 4, a. 2, n. 42: Ad hoc ut aliquid sit et dicatur potentia passiva saltem minus proprie et rigore ... minime requiritur quod in se recipiat actum, vel formam, respectu cuius dicitur potentia passiva: sed sufficit quod subjectum rigore receptivum coaptet ad recipiendum actum, vel formam ... Quare concesso quod character baptismi non recipiat in se illos effectus, ad quos homines aptat minime sequitur non esse veram potentiam passivam et receptivam, licet minus proprie.' GONET, Clypeus theol. thom., De Sacramentis, disp. 4, a. 2, n. 79: 'Sufficit ad rationem potentiae passivae quod reddat subjectum capax receptionis alicuius formae vel actus ... Character baptismalis licet in se proprie non recipiat illa sacramenta aut alios characteres eo ipso tamen quod hominem disponat ad illorum receptionem habet sufficienter quod requiritur ad rationem potentiae physicae passivae.' COTENSON, Theol. mentis et cordis, Lib. 2, p. 7, diss. 1, cap. 2. Both BANEZ (in III, p. 63, a. 2, n. 8) and SYLVIVS (in III, a. 63, a. 2) are led to propose that the character simply gives a moral right to receive sacramental grace. X

They suggest that it may be strictly passive to other characters in the sense that it receive them as a subject (79). They nearly all admit that it must have some action of its own, whatever object they assign to this (80).

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- (79) - Cf. SALMANTICENSES, 1b.; GONET, 1b., n. 83 (cp., however, n. 79, quoted above, note 78); JOHN OF ST THOMAS also admits this as a possibility, disp. 25, a.2, n.181, but this a secondary aspect of his teaching.
- (80) - Cf. CAJETAN, in III, q. 73, a. 5: 'Patet etiam non sic intelligendam characterem esse potentiam passivam tamquam si poneretur pure passive. Potest enim aliquem actum habere.' SALMANTICENSES, disp. 5, dub. 3, n. 49: 'Character baptismalis non est mera potentia aut capacitas passiva, sed importat etiam activam virtutem, praesertim ad eliciendum actus sub ratione dispositionis congruae ad suscipiendum caetera sacramenta; quamvis enim non insignitus eo characterе queat omnes illos actus secundum speciem elicere, non tamen secundum quod ad sacramenta disponunt.' (The 'causal' bias of the Salmanticenses is to be noted in the idea of disposition.) N. 50 they speak of the character as 'quaedam potentia executiva instrumentalis ... praesertim quantum ad susceptionem et administrationem sacramentorum. Quare character et debet esse participatio potentiae executivae Dei et recipi in potentia executiva animae ... Ad characterem spectat exequi actiones sacras externas, elevando scilicet intellectum practicum et concurrendo simul cum illo ad executionem et directionem praedictarum operationum ... Perficit (character) intellectum practicum ut efficiat operationes pertinentes ad cultum Dei et quantum ad hoc nos Christo facit consimiles. ... Unde facile intelligitur characterem baptismi recipi in intellectu

In this they are merely reproducing what St Thomas teaches explicitly in III, q. 63, a. 4 where he asks whether the subject of the character is a power of the soul :

'The character is a certain seal impressed on the soul for receiving or giving to others what belongs to divine worship. Now, divine worship consists in certain acts. But it is the powers of the soul that are directed towards acts, in the same way as its essence is directed towards existence. Consequently, the subject of the character is not the essence of the soul, but one of its powers' (81).

The reply to the first objection states that grace is given to bearers of the character only in order

'that they may carry out worthily what they are deputed to. Hence a subject is to be assigned to the character with reference to the acts belonging to divine worship, rather than with reference to grace' (82).

./ - practico, communicando eius imperio efficaciam, ut alias potentias moveat ad validam receptionem caeterorum sacramentorum.' Dom. SOTO, In IV Sent., dist. 1, q. 4, a.6: 'Susceptio et administratio est actus et exercitium divini cultus.'

(81) - III, q. 63, a. 4: 'Character est quoddam signaculum quo anima insignitur ad suscipiendum vel aliis tradendum ea quae sunt divini cultus. Divinus autem cultus in quibusdam actibus consistit. Ad actus autem proprie ordinantur potentiae animae, sicut essentia ordinatur ad esse. Et ideo character non est sicut in subiecto in essentia animae, sed in eius potentia.' Cf. In IV Sent., d. 7, q.2, a.1, sol. 2 (p. 281, n. 111).

(82) - Ib., ad 1: '... ex consequenti divina largitas

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Likewise the second reply defends the assignation of a power as the subject of the character on the grounds that

'whatever is directed towards action is to be attributed to a power' (83).

It is finally in the reply to the third objection of this important article that St Thomas explains the new object given by the character to the power which is its subject:

'The character is directed towards what belongs to divine worship. Divine worship is a certain profession of faith by external signs. Consequently, the character must be in the intellectual power of the soul, in which is faith' (84).

St Thomas makes no distinction here between the character of the minister and that of the subject. This article, and in particular the reply to the third objection, justifies fully the teaching of John of St Thomas that the characters are directed essentially towards giving

./.. - recipientibus characterem gratiam largitur, per quam digne impleant ea ad quae deputantur, Et ideo characteri magis est attribuendum subiectum secundum rationem actuum ad divinum cultum pertinentium, quam secundum rationem gratiae.'

(83) - Ib., ad 2: '... omne quod ad actum ordinatur est potentiaetribuendum.'

(84) - Ib., ad 3: 'Character ordinatur ad ea quae sunt divini cultus. Qui quidem est quaedam fidei protestatio per exteriora signa. Et ideo oportet quod character sit in cognitiva potentia animae, in qua

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sacramental validity to the worshipful acts of minister and subject. The distinction between the two characters corresponds to the parts played by minister and subject respectively in the sacramental sign-action and in the production of grace to which this action is finally directed (85).

This in no way diminishes the personal activity of a conscious subject whose intention of receiving the sacrament is thus given sacramental validity and is enabled to complete the sign-action by making the sacrament actually received and hence operative. It is precisely because it is through the baptismal character that this validity is imparted to the subject's intention and that the sacrament is signified as 'received' that this character is said to be 'passive'. It enables the subject to provide the passive element of the sign. It is because such validity implies divine intervention in the sacraments that the character is said to be instrumental. In other

./ - est fides.' Cf. ib., a. 1, ad 1: 'Fideles Christi... ad actus convenientes praesenti Ecclesiae deputantur ...'

(85) - Cf. III, q. 63, a. 2: 'Divinus cultus consistit vel in recipiendo aliqua divina, vel in tradendo aliis. Ad utrumque autem horum requiritur quaedam potentia; nam ad tradendum aliquid aliis, requiritur potentia activa; ad recipiendum autem requiritur potentia passiva.'

words, it can produce its formal effect, validity, only when the sacramental action actually signifies the divine decree of justification. These are conclusions that are implicit in St Thomas's article (86).

Some modifications are to be made in the case of reception of the sacraments by an unconscious person. When one who is baptized receives a sacrament in this condition his intention - and he must have an habitual intention, whether implicit or explicit - cannot intervene actively; neither, therefore, can his character. As already explained, he receives the sacrament in the fashion of a child, ad modum pueri. Nevertheless, his character may be said to pertain to the perfection of the sacramental sign in so far as it is itself a sign of deputation to Christian worship (87). Administration of a sacrament other than baptism (unless qualified by a

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- (86) - Note that it is immediately after he has said that the baptismal character is a passive power that St Thomas goes on: 'Sciendum tamen quod haec spiritualis potestas est instrumentalis ... Habere enim sacramentalem characterem competit ministris Dei' (III, q. 63, a. 2)
- (87) - Cf. III, q. 63, a. 2, ad 4. This involves the knowledge that the Church has that a person has submitted to baptism. Cf. also JOHN OF ST THOMAS, loc. cit. disp. 25, a. 2, n. 181: 'Datur enim potentia passiva ... ut [aliquid] sacramentaliter recipiatur; est autem sacramentaliter recipere, cum debita intentione habituali, vel virtuali, vel actuali recipere.'

condition in the form) signifies that the subject is a member of the Church. Here again, as with the habitual intention that is required of those who previously had the use of reason, if the subject does not in fact possess a character the sign-action is false and no effect can follow.

An 'instrumental power' (88)

This is the crucial point of St Thomas's teaching on the baptismal character which, it appears, can be adequately explained only in the light of what John of St Thomas says about the character as a passive power. The commentators follow St Thomas in saying of all three characters that they are instrumental (89). Since, however,

(88) - Cf. III, q. 63, a. 2: 'Sciendum tamen quod haec spiritualis potentia est instrumentalis.'

(89) - Cf. SALMANTICENSIS, tr. 22, disp. 5, dub. 2, nn.31, 37, 39, 51 (referring to baptismal character explicitly); GONET, De sacramentis, disp. 4, a.2, nn. 59, 72; SYLVIUS, in III, q. 63, a.2; BANEZ, in III, q. 63, a. 2, nn. 6, 8 (referring to baptismal character explicitly); BILLUART, diss. 4, a.2 and a.3; CAJETAN has no comment in III, q. 63, a. 2.

they relate the instrumentality of the priestly character directly to the production of grace (90) they are at a loss to explain the instrumentality of the character of baptism and are content simply to report St Thomas's own words (91).

For John of St Thomas instrumentality is implicit in the very notion of a passive sacramental power. He

(90) - Cf. SALMANTICENSES, ib., nn. 34, 46; GONET, ib., nn. 60, 72; BANEZ, ib., n. 7; BILLUART, ib.; SYLVIUS, ib., however, does not agree and quotes III, q. 63, a.4, ad 1: 'Character directe quidem et propinque disponit animam ad ea quae sunt divini cultus exequenda.'

(91) - BANEZ, loc. cit., n. 8, is an exception: 'Potest dici instrumentalis,' he explains, 'eo quod non est proportionata secundum se ad recipiendum sacramenta, scil., gratiam quae est effectus sacramentorum, sed solummodo constituit hominem communicatorem divinorum quantum ad jus quoddam quod acquirit ex eo quod baptizatus est ad petenda et recipienda sacramenta. Et fortasse possemus dicere quod illa potentia dicitur instrumentalis moraliter, non physice, vel potius secundum quamdam similitudinem ad facultatem quae proprie dicitur instrumentalis. Quae similitudo consistit in hoc quod, quomodo facultas quae proprie dicitur instrumentalis non est proportionata ad effectum ad quem efficienter concurrit, ita etiam illa potentia ad recipienda sacramenta non est proportionata ad formam quae est effectus sacramentorum, scilicet ad gratiam.'

refers to Cajetan's teaching that the baptismal character is not a merely passive power and explains that

'just as the minister is a living instrument who is not simply passively applied to producing the effect of the sacrament but who is applied as a living being, so the baptismal character is given for receiving as a minister who is a living instrument' (92).

This is a form of reception to which no parallel is to be found outside the sacraments; it is something that follows immediately on the nature of the sacraments as signs which are used by God for producing grace.

'The sacraments are received by the body "naturally", that is to say, as corporeal entities; by reason of the character they are received "sacramentally" and as valid sacramental actions. ... For this it is not required that the character itself receive the reality of the sacramental action, since its purpose is not to receive the sacrament "naturally" and as a physical entity, but that such a sacrament should be received with sacramental validity and precisely as a sacrament. Though the character is in the soul it is responsible for the whole man receiving the action sacramentally and not merely naturally' (93).

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- (92) - JOHN OF ST THOMAS, loc. cit., disp. 25, a.2, n.129:
 'Character non est potentia passiva pure, ..., sed sicut minister est instrumentum, quod non pure passive agitur, sed agitur sicut vivens, sic character baptismalis datur ad recipiendum sicut minister qui est animatum instrumentum.'
- (93) - Ib., n. 130: 'Sacramenta recipiuntur in corpore quasi naturaliter, seu ut entitates quaedam corporeae, ./.

This is to say that the character is a 'passive' power in that its intervention enables the sacrament to exist formally as received by the subject. John of St Thomas goes on to develop this further. 'What is involved, ' he asks, 'in "receiving sacramentally" ?' He replies :

'To receive the sacraments sacramentally, in other words to receive them validly by reason of the character, this is [what is implied on the part of the subject by reason of the fact that] the sacraments depend in their very existence as sacraments on a subject actually receiving, in the category of a material cause' (94)

It is of paramount importance to take account of the modification attached to the idea of material cause.

./.. - medio autem caractere sacramentaliter, et ut validae actiones sacramentales ... Ad hoc non requiritur quod character realitatem actionis sacramentalis suscipiat in se, quia non datur ad naturaliter et in genere entis suscipiendum characterem [sic - for sacramentum: see following phrase] sed ut tale sacramentum suscipiatur valide sacramentaliter et in ratione sacramenti. Et licet character sit in anima tamen facit quod totus homo sacramentaliter suscipiat hanc actionem et non solum naturaliter.'

(94) - Ib., n. 131 (This extract is difficult to translate because of its 'existential' character): 'Et si quaeras, quid sit sacramentaliter suscipere ut ad hoc requiratur potentia physica passiva, respondetur, quod sacramentaliter suscipere sacramenta, seu valide suscipere ex vi characteris, est dependere sacramenta in ratione sacramenti a subjecto suscipiente in genere causae materialis.'

The sacraments 'in their very existence as sacraments' depend on the subject as on such a cause; and this means primarily that the subject acts as the passive element in the sign-action of the sacrament.

Again :

'The action depends intrinsically for its sacramentality on the subject with a character, in the category of material cause' (95).

Therefore, before a sacrament can exist as applied to an individual subject that subject must possess a character and, if conscious, activate his character by forming an intention of receiving the sacrament. The sacramental action of administration is intrinsically deficient if this submission is not made. John of St Thomas goes on to explain why this demands a physical passive power by drawing an ^aalogy with the activity of the minister of the sacrament. Just as the minister requires a physical, active power if the actions which he performs are to be sacramental, that is, are to be valid sacramental signs,

(95) - Ib., n. 130: 'Dependet intrinsece actio illa ut sacramentalis sit a subiecto habente characterem, in genere causae materialis.'

so the subject requires a physical, passive power if, in his reception, he is to serve as a material cause on which the sacrament depends, first of all in the order of signification, not as an empty human action, but precisely as enriched by the power of Christ (96).

The character is not, consequently, itself receptive of the effect of the sacrament. It serves rather to make the sacrament effective in so far as it gives sacramental validity to the intention by which the subject completes the sign-action of administration and reception. It is in virtue of this intention that the subject acts as a term for the action of the sacrament, on the human level of signification; but by this very fact, in virtue of his character, the subject completes the application to

(96) - Ib., n. 131: 'Et sicut ad operandum sacramenta non solum in quantum actiones naturales sunt, v.g., absolutionem, unctionem, ablutionem etc., sed in quantum sacramentales sunt, indiget homo potentia quadam activa physica, quae est character; ita ad suscipiendum eiusdem actiones in quantum sacramentales sunt, indiget homo physica potentia passiva a qua in genere causae materialis dependet sacramentum ut sacramentum sit, id est, non ut purum elementum, aut elementalis actio, sed ut habet excellentias quas a Christi virtute participat sacramentum.'

himself of the sacrament as an action of Christ, first of all on the level of signification, consequently as a cause. It is only now that there is any possibility of the sacrament producing an effect. It is because the subject makes this final application of the sacrament to himself - an application that is itself strictly sacramental or on the level of signification and only consequently of causality - that he can be said to act as a minister of God. Whether he receives grace from the sacrament that he has helped to apply to himself in this way depends, not on his character, but on his dispositions, in other words, on whether he has used his character properly or not (97).

The passive power is consequently called instrumental,

'not as though it were a movement and a power derived from the principal agent; for that would make of it an active power [that is, it is not an efficient instrumental power] .

(97) - Ib., n. 132: 'Potentia passiva debet esse susceptiva actus in se quando est in principali agente; quando vero est in ministro, sufficit quod reddat illum aptum ad hoc sacramentum et collatum validum sit et valide susceptum, licet non conferat ut digne et debite sit susceptum.'

It is said to be instrumental in so far as it is ministerial and serving in ministerial fashion so that the effect may be received in the subject, not entitatively and materially, but sacramentally. For sacramental reception is in a certain sense ministerial. And therefore the power for receiving effects in this way is not something perfect in the genus of power, since it is not for perfectly [or materially] receiving those effects, but for receiving them sacramentally and in ministerial fashion ... in so far as a person moves himself to receive those things that belong to divine worship, as a minister and a living instrument' (98).

Though the baptismal character does not receive a

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- (98) - Ib., n. 135: 'Potentia passiva non dicitur instrumentalis quasi motio, et virtus derivata a principali agente; sic enim ... solum reducitur ad activam rationem potentiae; sed dicitur instrumentalis, quasi ministerialis, et deserviens ministerialiter ut effectus suscipiantur in subjecto non entitatively et materialiter sed sacramentaliter. Sacramentalis enim receptio quasi ministerialis est; et ideo potentia ad suscipiendum sic effectus, non est aliquid perfectum in genere potentiae cum non detur ad perfecte suscipiendum illos, sed ad suscipiendum sacramentaliter et ministerialiter, ... quatenus movet se aliquis ad recipiendum ea quae sunt divini cultus tamquam minister et instrumentum animatum.' Cf. ib., n.181. - John of St Thomas suggests that the baptismal character may also physically receive not only the other characters but also sacramental grace precisely as sacramental and as perfecting the intellect in the performance of acts of worship (cf. ib., n. 134). As an accompaniment to his main theme he argues that even in receiving these

transient elevation from Christ, it can achieve its effect only when the subject is actually subordinated as a material cause to the sacrament. This is the normal inter-play of formal and material causality. Hence the character is only 'by reduction', reductive, a power.

Because it bears this power the intellect of the baptized Christian is enabled, in producing connaturally an external profession of faith, to serve as a minister the strictly sacramental action by which Christ sanctifies men (99). The sign-action of the sacraments of the Church to which the characters of orders and baptism are directed has no other purpose than to signify and to put into effect

./ - forms the character would be a ministerial power since these all pertain to the subject's action as a minister; cf. ib., nn. 181, 182.

(99) - Ib., disp. 25, a. 4, n. 25: 'Potentia[he is referring to the intellect] est tota inclinata ad actus, et inclinatio ad agendum, et ideo connaturaliter et juxta modum proprium solum est capax activitatis, quae sit actus primus aut secundus; ministerialiter autem est capax non solum activitatis quae sit actus primus, sed etiam potentiae, sive activae, sive passivae in ordine ad actus, quos ministerialiter debet exercere, si ministeriale illud exercitium habeat proportionem et convenientiam cum actibus illius potentiae in qua subjectatur; sic enim character cum sit potentia ad protestandum exterius fidem per signa sensibilia, convenienter in ipso subjecto fidei ponitur.'

the divine will of justification. Indeed, their very existence as sacraments of Christ is dependent less on the actions of men than on that of God and Christ. What the minister and subject produce as principal causes by that very fact is used by Christ as sign and as cause. Hence the essentially incomplete nature of what they do as principal causes. It is something that must be brought to perfection by Christ. The subject's rôle may therefore be described as that of serving Christ ministerially or instrumentally as the person in whom the sacrament is to produce its effect; that is to say, in the category of material cause primarily in the order of signification, consequently in the order of causality. This is far as John of St Thomas goes; but it appears to be possible to determine more precisely the relation of the subject's participation in the sacramental action to the physical causality of grace by the sacrament.

In its strict and proper sense instrumental causality is verified only in the order of physical efficient causes. The instrument is active in producing the effect, not by reason of its own form, but because it is moved by the principal cause, receiving from it a transient eff-

icacy, vis fluens (100). The action of the instrument as such is the action of the principal cause in so far as the latter uses the proper action of the instrument (101). Thus the instrument produces the whole effect, in its own order and in subordination to the principal cause.

This notion is transferred to other contexts. Thus a delegate or a sign may be called instruments, the one moral, the other logical, since both draw efficacy in their actions from some other source. Their separate relations to their 'principal causes' are clearly analogical.

Likewise, within the order of physical causality itself, not all instruments correspond to the strict definition. Since God operates in all actions, even secondary causes may be said to be his instruments, though this does not involve any transient elevation of the creature (102). Nor do all entities that serve as instruments attain the effect of the principal cause; some produce only a disposition which calls for the final effect (103).

(100) - Cf. De Ver., q. 27, a. 4; ib., ad 4.

(101) - Cf. III, q. 19, a. 1.

(102) - Cf. De Pot., q. 3, a. 7.

(103) - Cf. In IV Sent., d.1, q.1, a.4, sol.1 (p.31, n.123).

Of instruments that attain the final effect, some do so by disposing the material cause (dispositio operata), others modify the action of the principal cause (dispositio operans) (104). An example of the latter is the imagination which is the instrument of the active intellect in producing a species in the passive intellect (105). In all of these analogical applications the notion of instrument maintains one connotation: the instrument always attains some effect that lies beyond its natural power (106).

The sacraments are directed towards the production of grace and, together with the minister and in subordination to the humanity of Christ and God, intervene physically as instruments in the strict sense in causing this effect. The sign-action which precedes (by a priority of nature only) and regulates this causal action is wholly attributable as a common act of worship to minister and subject in so far as they, as principal causes, intend to do what the Church does. Their proper action ends

(104) - Cf. JOHN OF ST THOMAS, disp. 24, a. 1, n. 577.

(105) - Cf. J. GREDT, Elementa philosophiae, vol. I, nn. 576-579, vol. II, nn. 765-768.

(106) - Cf. In IV Sent., d. 1, q. 1, a. 4, sol. 1 (p. 32, n. 126).

here; but it is to this action of theirs that God conforms his sanctifying action which is signified and put into effect by means of it. This constitutes the full instrumental intervention of the subject and the primary instrumental intervention of the minister. The subject does nothing more than provide a term for the action of God by appropriating the sign-action to himself. This is, strictly speaking, confined to the order of signification; but, since the causality of the sacrament follows on this order, the subject, by the action which his passive part in the sign demands, may be said to 'modify' the divine action. The 'instrumental' activity involved is that of dispositio operans, and it may be described by reason of its proper effect in the order of signification as material instrumental causality. (The subject, however, elicits the action in the manner of an efficient cause.) It is to be noted that this is a wholly unique form of instrumentality. In every other example of efficient causality the material cause receives immediately the effect. Only in the sacraments where efficient causality follows upon signification must an instrumental material cause intervene on the level of signification.

Notes on certain of the sacraments

In the sacrament of baptism it is clear that no character intervenes on the part of the subject (107). Here, however, the simple intention of an adult plays the same part as does an intention made valid by a character in the other sacraments. This is because of the very nature of the sacrament which is not for those who are already members of the Church, but for those who are seeking entrance (108). An analogy to the inhering instrumental power of the character might be found in the right won by Christ over all men in his Passion.

In penance and matrimony the acts of the subject take the place of the matter of the sacrament and are used by God in producing the effect (109). The charac-

(107) - B. DURST, O.S.B., De characteribus sacramentalibus, (Xenia thomistica, Rome, 1924, pp. 541-581) attempts to show that the baptismal character intervenes in the sacrament of baptism itself. This is unnecessary; it was not taught by St Thomas and appears contrary to his notions of baptism as spiritual generation and as the janua sacramentorum; cf. Cont. Gent., IV, c.59: '... ad susceptionem aliorum sacramentorum ...'.

(108) - Cf. JOHN OF ST THOMAS, disp. 25, a. 4, n. 40.

(109) - Cf. III, q. 84, a.2; q.86, a.6; Supp., q. 42, a.1; q. 42, a. 3, ad 2; CAJETAN, in III, q. 84, a. 2, n. 4.

ter of baptism performs the same function in these sacraments as in the others in so far as it enables the subject to receive sacramentally. It is, therefore, only at the moment of absolution that the character is active in penance. The three acts of the penitent require its intervention only in so far as they are present at this moment. To enter into the contract of marriage requires no special sacramental power since it is a natural act; but to participate in the ceremony as a subject of a sacrament the baptismal character is required (110). Consequently, though it might be said that in a marriage of two baptized persons each partner is 'minister' of the sacrament in relation to the other, this must be understood to be an analogical use of the term. The attempt of some theologians to explain the activity that is to be attributed to the baptismal character by asserting that it is required for contracting marriage is unacceptable. The same is to be said of the suggestion that the baptismal

(110) - Cf. JOHN OF ST THOMAS, disp. 25, a. 2, n. 100 :
 '... matrimonium autem, quia non fit per aliquam sacram actionem, sed per contractum naturalem; et ideo specialem deputationem non requirit ad ministrationem eius, ad susceptionem autem requirit quod contrahentes sunt baptizati.'

character is active when a layman baptizes in case of necessity. Such efforts as these to extend the layman's participation in the sacraments serve only to confuse the notion of the passive cultual power by reason of which he plays an essential part in the Church's liturgy.

Notion of opus operatum

Nothing of what has been said takes away from the inner power of the sacraments to justify and to bring increase of grace quite beyond what the subject could merit for himself. This is taken for granted as the teaching of the Church. The whole discussion has been concerned with what is required on the part of the subject for this power to be brought to bear on the soul.

It is accepted from the Church therefore that the sacraments produce their effects ex opere operato, that is, because of direct divine intervention. It has been shown, however, that according to the theology of the Summa the opus operatum which is used as the vehicle of the divine action is itself produced by the common action of minister and subject. The opus operatum is their common act of external worship, in which the minister plays the

active, the subject the passive, part. These parts, as has already been seen, are denominated 'active' and 'passive' by reason of their respective functions in the sacramental sign. To fulfil these symbolic functions action is required of both minister and subject. The opus operans is therefore twofold, distinguished according as the elements of the opus operatum are dependent on either minister or subject. In the Sentences the opus operatum was understood to be the result of the minister's action alone. The development of St Thomas's doctrine in the Summa requires that the opus operans of the subject be also made partially responsible for the opus operatum. In this chapter the essential element of the subject's opus operans - his intention of receiving the sacrament - has been indicated. The following chapter investigates what elements are required for integral or fruitful participation in the sacraments.

Conclusions

I In the Sentences St Thomas reduces the participation of the subject to the minimum: for the majority of the sacraments it involves nothing more than an intention of reception which is a removens prohibens; in penance and matrimony it enters the essence of the sacrament. This follows on the point of view of the Sentences according to which the sacraments of the Church are considered merely as causes.

II In the Summa the sacraments are considered not as mere causes but as integral parts of external worship; and in the realm of signification the subject may be allowed a part that can be said to be 'in' the sacrament, always without prejudice to the essence of the sacrament. This is no more than a hint; but taken in conjunction with St Thomas's whole sacramental outlook - in particular his suggestions concerning the characters and his insistence on the ^{cultural} worshipful nature of the sacraments - it is extremely suggestive. Under pain of invalidity the subject must intend to receive the sacrament and must have the baptismal character for the sacraments other than baptism. In relation to the causality of the sacrament

the subject's acts are dispositive.

III In common with all action except creation the causality of the sacraments cannot be exercised without a subject. What is peculiar to this form of action is that it is preceded (by a priority of nature) and specified by a sign. It is therefore required that the conscious subject signify his willing acceptance of the sacrament before the latter can be actively applied to him as a concrete, practical sign of the Church's faith used instrumentally by God in producing sacramental grace and the characters. Thus the subject's intention forms an integral part of a true sacramental sign. Without it, those sacraments which exist only at the time of use, even though they have their essential parts, lack something required for their perfection. It is only when they are perfect as signs received by an individual that there is any possibility of their acting as causes.

IV Variations in the intention of the subject. What is essential to the sacrament is that it should signify the giving of grace to a subject. The state of consciousness of the individual subject to whom the sacrament is concretely applied determines the signification

of the complete sign-action. Thus, although all those who are unconscious (or wholly distracted) are incapable of any active participation and consequently receive such sacraments as are administered to them and they are capable of ad modum pueri, the sacramental sign differs according to the particular condition of the subject. If the subject is a child or an imbecile from birth the sacramental sign-action signifies as much and is true simply through physical submission. If the subject, however, is one who previously had the use of reason (or who is temporarily distracted) the sacramental sign will be true only if his will habitually accepts the sacrament, since what is signified is justification of one who is unconscious and who places no obstacle in the way of the sacrament. A conscious subject whose reception of the sacrament is a human act (this excludes one who is distracted and who has only an habitual intention) must have at least a virtual intention. Consequently, no generalization assigning the intention of the subject a lower degree than that of the minister is acceptable.

V The baptismal character is required to give validity to the subject's intention so that the common act of

worship performed by minister and subject (as principal causes), the actions of one forming the active element of the symbol, the actions of the other forming the passive element of the symbol, may be used by God and by ^hCrist to signify and put into effect the divine decree of sanctification as brought to bear on the individual subject. This is what is meant by calling the characters 'instrumental' powers. The subject provides a term for the action of God by appropriating the sign-action to himself. Acting thus on the level of signification he may further be said to have a certain part to play in relation to the causality of the sacrament since the causality follows on (posterori^otate naturae) the signification. The subject may be said to 'modify' the divine action in this sense and hence to act as an 'instrumental' cause in relation to grace, producing a disposition for the effect which is a dispositio operans, a disposition which consists in providing by his actions the passive element of the symbol. (This is not to be confused with the material dispositions required in the soul of the subject for receiving grace.) This is a wholly unique form of instrumentality. In every other

example of efficient causality the material cause receives immediately the effect. Only in the sacraments where efficient causality follows upon signification must an instrumental material cause intervene.

Thus, in summary, the subject as an efficient cause provides the material or passive element of the sign - this action is 'instrumental' in so far as it serves to complete the sign of the divine decree of justification as applied to the individual. Thus the subject by way of the sign applies the divine sacramental action to himself - therefore as an 'instrumental' 'material' cause. In relation to the actual infusion of grace the subject is a simple material - though human - cause.

VI The baptismal character is always a passive power in this sense. To think of it as 'active' in matrimony or baptism administered by a layman is to confuse St Thomas's notion of it.

VII The opus operatum 'from' which (ex) the effect of the sacrament is produced is the common act of external worship of minister and subject which is the sign of the divine decree of justifying the individual. The opus operans is therefore twofold, distinguished according as

certain elements of the opus operatum are dependent on the minister, others on the subject. The essential opus operans of the subject which is required for valid reception is willing acceptance of the sacrament. This involves the intention of receiving and, for sacraments other than baptism, implies the possession of the baptismal character.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE WORSHIP OF THE SUBJECT AND THE "OPUS OPERATUM".

Summary. Introduction. I - Dispositions for reception of the sacraments: dispositions for justification and for increase of charity. Worship in reception of the sacraments. Special cases. The principle of such worship (opus operans). II - The sacrifice of the Mass. Worship of the faithful in the Mass: St Thomas's teaching; papal teaching; recent theology. Solution. - Conclusions.

By his intention of receiving a sacrament the subject completes the sacramental sign-action or opus operatum and in this way makes the final application of the active power of the sacrament to himself. When the sacrament is one of those that impart a character this effect is produced by the very fact that the sacrament is validly received, without any virtuous act on the part of the subject being necessary (1). The primary effect of the sacrament, however, justification or

(1) - Cf. III, q. 68, a. 8: Faith is not required of the subject for the reception of the baptismal character: 'Non enim sacramentum perficitur per iustitiam hominis dantis vel suscipientis baptismum, sed per virtutem Dei'.

increase of grace, requires more of the subject than the simple intention of reception. What exactly is required varies according to the particular sacrament and the state of consciousness of the subject. St Thomas, in general terms, speaks of faith being necessary for justification and quotes St Augustine as saying that Christ brings the sinner to grace 'working in him, but not without him' (2). What is called for in the subject is discussed very thoroughly by theologians under the rubric of 'dispositions' or 'conditions' on the part of the subject for receiving grace. Here again in this formulation of the problem a preoccupation with the efficient causality of the sacrament to the virtual exclusion of the sacramental mode of that causality reveals itself. The description of the subject's acts as dispositions for grace is accurate; but it does not exhaust their theological significance. St Thomas's notion of the sacraments as signs of faith points

(2) - Cf. III, q. 68, a. 8: 'Hoc modo recta fides ex necessitate requiritur ad baptismum: quia, sicut dicitur Rom. 3, "iustitia Dei est per fidem Iesu Christi"'; q. 69, a. 6, obj. 2: 'Super illud Ioann. 14, "Maiora horum faciet", dicit Augustinus quod ut ex impio iustus fiat, "in illo, sed non sine illo Christus operatur".'

the way to a more adequate appreciation of their reception as acts of worship, elicited by the subject; and also, no less, of their administration as acts of worship of the minister.

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the interior acts of the subject in this light. For this it will not be necessary to determine in detail the dispositions required for the individual sacraments. This would involve specialized and debated problems, particularly concerning penance and Communion, the solutions to which do not materially affect the present discussion since they are concerned with the sacraments purely as causes. What is here proposed is an attempt to determine the relation of the subject's acts of virtue (or dispositions) to the sacrament (sacramentum tantum) considered as a sign, or, more accurately, to the opus operatum. This involves a study, first, of reception of a sacrament as an act of worship, and second, of the participation of the faithful in the Mass.

I

Dispositions for reception of a sacrament

St Thomas devotes no special question to the discussion of the dispositions required in the subject for receiving grace in the sacraments. His whole sacramental tract has to be placed in the context of his moral theology, and in particular, of his teaching on justification and the increase of charity. In the Tertia Pars he does no more than make particular applications of the general principles established elsewhere.

Dispositions for justification are distinguished by St Thomas: remote and proximate, according as they precede in time, or accompany, the infusion of grace (3). In his treatment of justification his principal interest lies with the proximate disposition in adults which consists in

(3) - Cf. I-II, q. 112, a. 2, ad 1: '... quaedam est simul cum ipsa infusione gratiae ... Est autem alia praeparatio gratiae imperfecta, quae aliquando praecedat donum gratiae gratum facientis, quae tamen est a Deo movente'; ib., ad 2; q. 113, a. 5, ad 3; a. 7, ad 1; De Ver., q. 28, a. 3, ad 10; ad 19; a. 4, ad 3; q. 28, a. 8; In IV Sent., d. 17, q. 1, a. 1, sol. 2 (p. 829, n. 31); a. 2, sol. 1, ad 1 (p. 834 n. 60); a. 3, sol. 3, ad 2 (p. 824, n. 105); a. 4, sol. 2 (p. 846, n. 132).

a movement of free will on which the infusion of grace infallibly follows (4) and which is so closely bound up with the infusion of grace that it belongs to the substance of justification (5). It involves, on the part of the intellect, faith (6), on the part of the will, an act of desire for God (7) which is a true act of charity and contrition (8). It is an important element of St Thomas's teaching, as understood by the majority of Thomists, that this act is dependent, as on an efficient cause, on the grace for which it is the disposition, or material cause (9). It

- (4) - Cf. I-II, q. 112, a. 3
- (5) - Cf. I-II, q. 113, a. 7, ad 1; In IV Sent., d. 17, a. 1, a. 4, sol. 2 (p. 846, n. 132).
- (6) - Cf. I-II, q. 113, a. 4; De Ver., q. 28, a. 4
- (7) - Cf. I-II, q. 113, a. 5; a. 6.
- (8) - Cf. I-II, q. 113, a. 4, ad 1; III, a. 85, a. 5; De Ver., q. 28, a. 8.
- (9) - Cf. I-II, q. 112, a. 2, ad 1: 'Talis operatio est quidem meritoria; sed non gratiae, quae iam habetur sed gloriae, quae nondum habetur'; q. 113, a. 8, ad 2: 'dispositio subiecti praecedit susceptionem formae ordine naturae, sequitur tamen actionem agentis per quam etiam ipsum subiectum disponitur. Et ideo motus liberi arbitrii naturae ordine praecedit consecutionem gratiae, sequitur autem gratiae infusionem'; De Ver., q. 28, a. 8, ad 3 in contrarium.- This interpretation is favoured by Cajetan, Dom. Soto, the Salmanticenses, Vasquez, Billot, against Durandus, Scotus, Suarez, De Lugo, John of St Thomas, etc.; cf. commentaries in I-II, q. 113.

is by this act of free will, proceeding wholly under the movement of God, that an adult is formally justified as a person (10). Such a disposition is not called for in a child or one who is unconscious, because of the very fact that these do not enjoy the use of reason and are justified by God according to their condition (11).

Analogous with the movement of free will required for justification is the proximate disposition that is necessary for the increase of charity. Though every act of charity disposes remotely for such an increase, it is only one that attains a higher degree of intensity

(10) - Cf. I-II, q. 114, a. 5, ad 1: 'Per fidem igitur iustificatur homo non quasi credendo mereatur iustificationem, sed quia dum iustificatur, credit, eo quod motus fidei requiritur ad iustificationem impii'; ib., q. 113, a. 3; De Ver., q. 28, a. 3: 'In adultis requiritur immutatio actus voluntatis ad iustificationem'; ib., ad 17: 'Deus virtutes in nobis operatur sine nobis virtutes causantibus, non tamen sine nobis consentientibus'; ib., ad 20.- Dr SCHILLEBEECKX, op. cit., pp. 561, f., restates with emphasis and clarity St Thomas's teaching on the necessity of an act of charity - and therefore of contrition - for justification of an adult. He calls this the 'subjectieve toeëigening' of grace, and 'immanentie van de verlossingsgenade in de persoon als persoon' (p. 572). His account of the attrition-contrition controversy in relation to penance is especially valuable (pp. 579 f.).

(11) - Cf. De Ver., q. 28, a. 3; ad 5.

that actually procures it (12). The intensity of this act is the human index to the divinely-wrought increase of charity (13).

It is one of the principal merits of Dr Schillebeeckx's work to have shown that the teaching on the relation between grace and free will established by St Thomas by means of his finely-fashioned notion of proximate disposition applies equally to sacramental and extra-sacramental justification and increase of charity (14). This is to say that the infusion of sacramental grace produces in an adult subject the proximate dispositions just reviewed. The dispositions, however, that are required for approaching a sacrament are distinct from those that are required at the moment of reception of grace and belong to the second member of St Thomas's distinction, namely, that of remote dispositions.

(12) - Cf. II-II, q. 24, a. 6: 'Non quolibet actu caritatis caritas actu augetur; sed quilibet actus caritatis disponit ad caritatis augmentum, inquantum ex uno actu caritatis homo redditur promptior iterum ad agendum secundum caritatem; et, habilitate crescente, homo prorumpit in actum ferventiorum dilectionis, quo conetur ad caritatis profectum; et tunc caritas augetur in actu'; ib., ad 2; a. 4, ad 3; I-II, q. 114, a. 8, ad 3.

(13) - Cf. SCHILLEBEECKX, op. cit., p. 623.

(14) - Cf. ib., pp. 579 f. and 623 f.

Whereas proximate dispositions are essential if man's nature is to be respected, remote dispositions are not always required; though it is normal that man should be prepared gradually for closer union with God (15). St Thomas compares this process in the sinner with the moving of an object to bring it into the light - or, more suggestively, with the movement of the light to shine on the object - and with the alteration that precedes generation (16). After faith, the first movement in the sinner on this path towards justification is fear, provoked by the threat of punishment for sin (17). This is followed by a movement of hope according to which, so as to win pardon, one forms

(15) - Cf. I-II, q. 113, a. 10: 'Est enim ista communis et consuetus cursus iustificationis ut Deo movente interius animam, homo convertatur ad Deum, primo quidem conversione imperfecta, et postmodum ad perfectam deveniat'; ib., q. 112, a. 2, ad 1; ad 2; De Ver., q. 28, a. 3, ad 19; In IV Sent., d. 17, q. 1, a. 2, sol. 1, ad 1 (p. 834, n. 60).

(16) - I-II, q. 113, a. 1; cf. I, q. 53, a. 3.

(17) - Cf. De Ver., q. 28, a. 4, ad 3; In IV Sent., d. 14, q. 1, a. 2, sol. 1, ad 2 (p. 596, n. 108); II-II, q. 19, a. 2; a. 4. Teaching of the Church: Leo X, Bull, Exsurge Domine, 15 June 1520, prop. 6 (Denz. 746); Council of Trent, sess. 6, Decret. de iustificatione, cap. 6 (Denz. 798); can. 8 (Denz. 818), Scripture: Prov., 1:7; 8:13; 9:10; 15:33; 19:23; Eccles., 1:16; 1:25; 1:27; 21:7; 32:18.

a resolution of amendment (18). In 'servile' fear and hope is included a movement of repentance, though not as yet inspired by charity (19). In III, q. 85, a. 5, St Thomas, without making any explicit reference to the transition, goes on from this to enumerate the proximate dispositions imperated by charity (20). The Council of Trent, however, dealing solely with preparation for baptism and therefore not immediately concerned with the metaphysics of grace, speaks of 'beginning to love God as the source of all justice', in other words, of initial, and not true, charity (21).

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- (18) - Cf. III, q. 85, a. 5; II-II, q. 19, a. 1, ad 2. Teaching of Church: Council of Trent, loc. cit. (Denz. 798); can. 3 (Denz. 813). Scripture: Ps., 32:18; 36:40; 90:14; Prov., 28:25; Eccles., 2:9; Matt., 9:2; Rom., 8:24; I Jn., 3:3.
- (19) - Cf. In IV Sent., d. 14, q. 1, a. 2 (p. 596, n.106).
- (20) - III, q. 85, a. 5: '... motus fidei ... motus timoris servilis ... motus spei ... motus caritatis, quo alicui peccatum displicet secundum seipsum, et non iam propter supplicia. ... motus timoris filialis ...'.
- (21) - Council of Trent, sess. 6, Decret. de iustificatione, cap. 6 (Denz. 798): '(Deum) tamquam omnis iustitiae fontem diligere incipiunt.' That this refers, not to perfect, but to initial, charity is clear from the history of the Council; cf. Acta (Ed. Goerresiana, t.5); 1st redaction of Decree, p. 384, n. 160 (not 'sine dilectione aliqua') (cf. p. 387, l.42; p. 388, l. 9); 2nd redaction, p. 422, l.43, p.423, ./.

This movement towards God may be understood as an act of love 'of concupiscence' as distinct from love 'of benevolence' (22). As such it is included in the movement of hope noted by St Thomas in III, q. 85, a. 5 since the person from whom one hopes for help is the object of love (23).

These remote dispositions for justification represent what is required of the subject if he is to approach the sacraments of the dead as a responsible person and worthily. Such too is the state of one who is restored to grace by a sacrament of the living, received in good faith. Concerning one of the dispositions for baptism, namely, faith, the Church has issued certain specific di-

- ././ - l. 1 ('diligere incipimus'); discussion, p. 489, l. 16, p. 491, l. 16; 3rd redaction, p. 636 ('dilectio' omitted); discussion, p. 645, l. 43 (calling for insertion of 'per aliquam dilectionem'), p. 655, ll. 39 f. (calling for insertion of 'actus dilectionis'), p. 661, ll. 35 f., p. 681; 4th redaction, p. 695, l. 31 ('Deum omnis justitiae fontem diligere incipiunt') (cf. p. 698, l. 34). It is to be noted also that ch. 7 of the Decree begins: 'Hanc dispositionem seu praeparationem iustificatio ipsa consequitur' (Denz. 799). It follows that ch. 6 is concerned with remote dispositions.
- (22) - The interpretation of the Council is a matter of dispute. The description of God as 'source of justice' appears to imply love 'of concupiscence'; and so the majority of theologians understand it.
- (23) - Cf. I-II, q. 40, a. 7; II-II, q. 62, a. 4; q. 17, a. 8; De Spe, a. 3.

reactions which require explicit belief in the principal mysteries of religion (24). It is clear, therefore, that when applied to conscious adults a positive interpretation is to be placed on texts in which St Thomas says that the part of the subjects interior dispositions in relation to the efficacy of baptism is that of removing obstacles, removens prohibens (25). These texts are balanced by others in which the enumeration of acts demanded of the subject for worthy reception corresponds to the remote dispositions for justification (26).

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- (24) - Cf. replies of the Holy Office, 25 Jan. 1703 (Denz. 1349a), 10 May 1703 (Denz. 1349b), 30 March 1898 (Denz. 1966a).
- (25) - Cf., e.g., In IV Sent., d. 2, q. 2, a. 4, sol. un. (p. 101, n. 128); d. 4, q. 3, a. 1, sol. 3, ad 2 (p. 184, n. 215); d. 4, q. 3, a. 2, sol. 1 (p. 187, n. 225); ib., ad 3 (p. 187, n. 229); d. 6, q. 1, a. 2, sol. 2 (p. 238, n. 68); ib., sol. 3 (p. 238, n. 71); De forma absolutionis (679); De articulis fidei (614).
- (26) - Cf. In IV Sent., d. 4, q. 3, a. 2, sol. 2 (p. 188, n. 230: '... oportet quod se habet in debita dispositione ad causam agentem et ad effectum percipiendum'. The acts required are specified: faith, devotion, contrition, observance of the Church's ritual, absence of contempt (ib., n. 230 f.); d. 6, q. 1, a. 2, sol. 3 (p. 238, n. 72): 'contritio sive devotio'; ib., a. 3, sol. 1, ad 1 (p. 241, n. 90): faith; d. 4, q. 3, a. 1, sol. 3, ad 1 (p. 184, n. 214): movement of free will. Cf. also the texts referring to fictio: ib., d. 4, q. 3, a. 2, sol. 2, ad 1

Worthy reception of a sacrament of the living involves on the part of an adult at least a remiss movement of charity which is either actual or virtual. Since, however, there can be no increase of grace without a more fervent act of charity the sacrament itself must produce this disposition in the subject (27). In the Sentences, St Thomas says that 'actual devotion' is required for

./.. - (p. 188, n. 234); d. 6, q. 1, a. 3, sol. 1 (p. 241, n. 88). Charity is not required; therefore attrition, not necessarily contrition, is sufficient for receiving baptism; ib., ad 5 (p. 242, n. 94); In ad Rom., c. 11, lect. 4 (927). The necessity for devotion in receiving the sacraments and the effectiveness of the ceremonies for arousing it are constantly recurring themes in the Tertia Pars: III, q. 61, a. 1; a. 2; q. 63, a. 4; q. 64, a. 2, ad 1; q. 66, a. 10; q. 68, a. 3; a. 4; a. 8; a. 12; q. 69, a. 6; a. 8; ad 2; q. 69, a. 9; q. 71, a. 2; a. 3; etc. Confirmation and the Eucharist can justify a sinner who has not contrition but, while he has neither knowledge of, nor affection for, his sin, receives the sacrament devoutly and reverently: III, q. 72, a. 7, ad 2; q. 79, a. 3.

(27) - Cf. SCHILLEBEECKX, op. cit., pp. 623 f. S. stresses the necessity for an act of charity in approaching the sacraments of the living. He writes; 'Door het sacrament wordt dan een onfeilbaar verband gelegd tussen deze caritasdaad, "actus remissus caritatis", en de vermeerdering van de heiligmakende genade met de daarmee gepaard gaande "actus ferventior caritatis", die tot het wezen zelf van de genadevermeerdering behoort bij bewuste adulten' (p. 624). He makes the necessary modifications in the case of unconscious subjects.

receiving extreme unction (28). He says the same there of Holy Communion (29); though in the Summa he teaches that even if the subject is distracted by venial sin, and thus momentarily incapable of an act of charity (30), he does not forfeit an increase of habitual grace or charity (31). Cajetan reconciles these two texts, saying that St Thomas does not teach in the Summa

'that the communicant wins an increase of grace even if he has no actual devotion; but that he does so even if he does not actually enjoy spiritual delectation, through the fault of his venial sin (for it cannot be through the fault of the sacrament). Such a communicant, distracted in this way, if he approaches the sacrament devoutly as regards his other acts, places no impediment in the way of habitual increase of grace' (32).

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- (28) - In IV Sent., d. 23, q. 2, a. 2, sol. 4.
 (29) - In IV Sent., d. 12, q. 2, a. 1, sol. 3 (p. 526, n. 177).
 (30) - Cf. I-II, q. 89, a. 1.
 (31) - III, q. 79, a. 8.
 (32) - CAJETAN in III, q. 79, a. 1 (n. 5): 'Non igitur docet haec littera quod sumens absque omni actuali devotione consequitur augmentum gratiae: sed quod sumens absque actuali refectione delectationis spiritualis, et hoc ex culpa sua veniali (quoniam non est ex defectu sacramenti), sic inquam sumens, sic mente distractus, si quoad alios actus devote accedit, habituale augmentum gratiae ex hoc non impeditur. Quod tamen posset aliunde impediri: puta ex tam parva devotione ut non sufficiat disponere ad augmentum gratiae.'

There is clearly room here for certain clarifications to be sought in the field of religious psychology so as to determine in particular the influence of the 'state of grace' on reception of the sacrament in various states of recollection and advertence. These problems are, however, marginal so far as the theology of the sacraments goes. What is normal and therefore to be urged on the faithful is that the sacraments should be received with recollection and devotion; and when this is done the subject of the sacraments of the living makes an act of charity, however remiss.

Worship in reception of the sacraments

When a sacrament is worthily received the act of practical intellect together with the bodily actions which put into effect the subject's intention constitute an external act of religion. For the sacraments of the living this act is imperated by charity, elicited by the virtue of religion; for the sacraments of the dead it is imperated by faith and hope (33). Thus the subject is

(33) - Cf. CAJETAN, in II-II, q. 81, a. 4, ad 2.

involved according to his whole supernatural psychology in receiving a sacrament and his act of submission to the minister is a true act of worship, differing in this respect in no way from other external acts of worship. Though his baptismal character gives this act sacramental validity, it does not affect its moral features. The subject completes the sacramental sign-action, the opus operatum, in virtue of his intention operating according to his character; and as a consequence his interior dispositions which elicited or imperated his intention are expressed outwardly by the opus operatum in so far as this is dependent on him. The opus operatum is the common symbolic action of minister and subject, one giving, the other receiving the material elements of the sacrament. In so far as it signifies the active power of God and of Christ infusing grace into the soul it does not express the subject's devotion in the manner of an external act of religion. It is the act of reception which makes the sacrament to be signified as received that is the subject's act of worship. This is all acted out on the level of signification, before (prioritate naturae) the sacrament is formally causing grace efficiently.

Combining this new aspect of the sacraments with what has already been said about the function of the faith of the Church in relating the sacramental sign to the salvific decree of God a complete notion may be formed of the sacraments as signs of faith. A worthily received sacrament is a sign of faith, first of all of the Church, secondly, of the subject (and likewise of the minister if he administers the sacrament worthily). Every valid sacrament is a common act of worship of the whole Church, performed through an official minister. A sacrament cannot be fruitful unless it be in some degree a personal act of worship of the subject.

This is the fuller sense of St Thomas's saying that the sacraments belong to divine worship (34). He indicates the vital union between the external action and the interior dispositions in several places. Grace is needed if the cultual actions to which the characters are

(34) - Cf. III, q. 61, a. 4; q. 63, a. 2; Cont. Gent., IV, c. 57; etc. III, q. 63, a. 6 refers to the effect of the sacraments, not to the sacramental action itself (i.e. to the sign-action preceding essentially causality), when it says: 'Non omnia sacramenta ordinantur ad divinum cultum'; cf. q. 63, Introd.

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ordained are to be performed as they should (35). The baptized gain a new, external extension to their incorporation into Christ by faith (36). Baptism is the sacrament or external profession of faith (37). The whole concept of fictio is that of a false profession, of performing an action which is ordained to worship without having the proper dispositions (38).

Special cases

Children and those who, being unconscious or men-

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- (35) - Cf. III, q. 63, a. 4, ad 1: 'Character directe quidem et propinque disponit animam ad ea quae sunt divini cultus exequenda: et quia haec idonee non fiunt sine auxilio gratiae ... ex consequenti divina largitas recipientibus characterem gratiam largitur, per quam digne impleant ea ad quae deputantur'; q. 68, a. 4; 'Ex hoc autem quod aliquis lavandum se praebet per baptismum, significatur quod se disponat ad interiorem ablutionem'; q. 80, a. 4: 'Quicumque (Eucharistiam) sumit ex hoc ipso significat se esse Christo unitum et membris eius incorporatum'.
- (36) - Cf. III, q. 68, a. 2: Those who have not baptism even in desire 'nec sacramentaliter nec mentaliter Christo incorporantur'; cp. III, q. 69, a. 5, ad 1: '... mentaliter ... corporaliter ...'.
- (37) - Cf. III, q. 78, a. 3, ad 6: 'Baptismus dicitur sacramentum fidei quia est quaedam fidei protestatio'; q. 70, a. 1; a. 2; q. 71, a. 1; Qdl. 6, q. 3, a. 1; ad 1.
- (38) - Cf. III, q. 69, a. 9; texts from Sentences, see above, n. 26.

tally unbalanced, receive such sacraments as they are capable of in the fashion of children, are unable to perform an act of worship. The sacrament is applied to them by the faith of the Church which the minister's intention serves. Children can contribute nothing to this official act of community worship; hence the sacraments of which they are subjects produce their effect solely by reason of the faith of the Church and through the operation of the Holy Spirit who prompts those responsible for the child to offer it to the Church to be baptized (or confirmed) and who communicates the merit of Christ to one who through no personal fault is in a state of sin (39).

(39) - Cf. III, q. 68, a. 9, ad 2: 'Fides autem unius, immo totius Ecclesiae, parvulo prodest per operationem Spiritus sancti qui unit Ecclesiam et bona unius alteri communicat' (Cf. III, q. 86, a. 2, ad 1); q. 34, a. 3; q. 68, a. 10, ad 3; q. 69, a. 6, ad 3. CAJETAN in III, q. 68, a. 9: 'In resp. ad 2 non sic intelligas Ecclesiae fidem prodesse infanti qui baptizatur, quasi meritum fidei existens in Ecclesia, salvat infantem, quoniam infans non per fidem, sed per fidei sacramentum, regulariter salvatur; sed intellige Ecclesiae merita prodesse infanti et iuxta articulum communionis sanctorum, et particulariter, tum orando pro infante, tum applicando eundem sacramentum, ex corde puro et caritate plena'. - The faith of the Church involved is that required for the existence of any sacrament.
Dr SCHILLEBEECKX's explanation of infant baptism

In the case of an unconscious adult who previously had the use of reason, however, the sacramental sign-action of the Church will not be completely 'true' if the subject is in any way lacking in dispositions. The part of the intention required for validity has already been discussed. In relation to moral dispositions the sacramental action signifies that the subject is a member of the Church who has at least habitual attrition, or, in the case of the Eucharist, who previously showed signs of devotion for the sacrament (40). If the state of the subject is not in conformity with this, the Church's community action, the opus operatum, by which she offers worship for a helpless member, is in part false and the full effect of the

./ - according to which the habit of faith given to the child is 'actuated' by the sacramental ceremony is unnecessarily complicated. (Op. cit., p. 614 : 'Het geloof van het kind dat wordt gedoopt, is dus geactueerd in de doopseldaad zelf, als geloofsdaad van de Kerk'; S.'s italics). St. Thomas speaks only of the Church professing faith in the person of the child to whom grace is given by the sacrament; cf. III, q. 71, a. 1, ad 3; q. 68, a. 9, ad 3; De Ver., q. 28, a. 3, ad 14. S.'s teaching is, besides, dependent on his general ideas on worship in the sacraments; see below.

(40) - Cf. III, q. 68, a. 12, ad 1; q. 80, a. 9; ad 1.

sacrament cannot follow, at least until the subject is properly disposed (41).

The principle of this worship (opus operans)

A question remains to be discussed concerning the worship offered by the subject, which has been raised by Dr Schillebeeckx. Does the sacramental action, the opus operatum, express the remote or the proximate dispositions of the subject? Dr Schillebeeckx answers: the proximate dispositions. This conclusion he advances as a corollary of his teaching that the proximate disposition is the subjective 'assimilation' (toeëigening) of the gift of grace, that is to say, the act of free will by which grace is accepted by the subject as a person. He expresses this notion in his own version of the opus-operatum terminology. He takes opus operatum to mean primarily the action of the Christ-mystery in the Church's

(41) - In contrast to the child there is a certain sense in which it may be said of the unconscious adult that his habitual faith, attrition or contrition are 'actuated' by the sacramental action of the Church since he receives as a member of the Church who at some time has made acts of these virtues; and such acts will have been directed either explicitly or implicitly towards Extreme Unction and Viaticum, at least.

cereemonial (42). He then formulates his conclusion: the opus operatum of a fruitful sacrament is not only the expression of the love of Christ and his Church, but also the external act of the subject, expressing the charity by which he makes his own the grace given him in the sacrament (43). Using opus operantisⁿ of these proximate dispositions of the subject, he goes on to formulate the same conclusion in an intentionally startling fashion: in a fruitful sacrament 'the opus operatum is the opus operantis'; that is to say, the sacramental sign of the Church's faith is, when fruitful, the personal external act of the subject's devotion, just as the response of the subject to grace is identified with the action of Christ on the soul (44).

(42) - SCHILLEBEECKX, op. cit., pp. 645, 646.

(43) - Cf. ib., p. 656: 'Door deze voltooide liefdeinzet wordt de sacramentele genade toegeëigend en wordt het sacrament meteen de uiterlijke vertekening van deze liefdebeleving, die door het sacrament zelf in leven werd geroepen. ... De vruchtbare sacramenten zijn aldus niet alleen de uitdrukking van het liefdeleven van Christus en Zijn Kerk, maar tevens "sacramenta-signa caritatis" van het onvangend subject.'

(44) - Cf. ib., p. 659: The subject must enter the sacramental action through faith, hope and love: 'Gebeurt dit wel, dan is het "opus operatum" het "opus operantis": d.w.z. het sacrament als symbooldaad van

Two observations seem called for. Neither of them disputes Dr Schillebeeckx's teaching on the nature of the proximate dispositions for receiving sacramental grace.

First, the opus operatum as such - whether the term be understood merely of the ceremony performed which is used by Christ, or of the visible act of Christ - is not the expression of the subject's dispositions. It is the act of reception that serves in this capacity; and this action is no more than an integral part of the sacramental sign-action which is the opus operatum.

Second, the essential participation of the subject in the sacramental action is procured by means of his intention and his character. In a fruitful sacrament his participation is an external act of religion in so far as this intention is elicited by the virtue of religion and imperated by the theological virtues. This participation is required for the very existence of the sacrament as applied to the subject and thus enjoys a priority of nature over the causality of the sacrament, in such a way that the character

./.. - het kerkelijk geloof is, bij vruchtbaarheid, meteen de persoonlijke tekenactiviteit van de innerlijke Godsbeleving.'

may be said to make of the subject a material instrumental cause of grace. The proximate dispositions for grace in the subject are in their turn produced efficiently by the causality of the sacrament. It is evident, therefore, that these proximate dispositions cannot elicit the intention which is essential to his reception of the sacrament, for this would imply that they were the effect of the sacrament and at the same time a presupposition to its efficient causality; and this is impossible.

It is to be observed that the sacrament produces its effect instantaneously (45). Thus it is in the same instant that the subject's intention, elicited by the remote dispositions, is given sacramental validity, and that the sacrament produces its effect together with the proximate dispositions for it in the subject. Though the preparatory and supplementary ceremonies are all intended to be acts of religion, the formal sacramental worship is confined to this instant in which the character functions as a passive power. Therefore the act in which, according

(45) - Cf. De Ver., q. 28, a. 9: Utrum justificatio impii fiat in instanti.

to Dr Schillebeeckx, the proximate dispositions consist, cannot elicit the act of reception as its external act. At the moment of sacramental reception both grace and the proximate dispositions for it are signified precisely as the effect of the sacrament. The act of reception is elicited only by the remote dispositions which remain, at least virtually, at the critical instant.

It seems necessary, therefore, to disagree with Dr Schillebeeckx on two points. It is only that part of the opus operatum for which the subject is directly responsible, namely, reception of the sacrament, that is the subject's act of worship. It is his remote, and not his proximate, dispositions that form, together with his intention, the opus operans that is expressed by the sacramental sign-action in so far as it depends on the subject. It is because the sacraments of the Church are causes as well as acts of worship that they signify the proximate dispositions of the subject. There can be no question of an elicited external act so far as these dispositions are concerned. The worshipful use of the sacraments is confined to their pre-causal reality as signs.

Taken literally - though obviously Dr Schillebeeckx's

whole teaching excludes this interpretation of his words - to say that the opus operatum is the opus operans (or the opus operantis) is to deny any efficacy to the sacraments other than that due to the merit of the subject, since the effect of the sacrament is produced ex opere operato. Such a phrase appears to concede the Protestant concept of the sacraments.

According to St Thomas's theology the sacraments are wholly integrated into the moral life of the faithful. Reception of the sacraments is an act of worship to be carried out with all the attention and devotion that should be given to any act of piety. By reason of the baptismal character this act of worship enters the new dimension of the sacramental order where it serves to bring the saving merits and power of Christ into contact with the subject so that he gains far richer graces than his own activity could merit. By participating in the worship of Christ, the Priest, through the sacraments the faithful are filled with the fruits of his worship. In one of the sacraments they participate in his worship in a special way. This must now be considered.

II

Before attempting to define the manner in which the faithful participate in the Mass some general ideas on the Eucharistic sacrifice itself must be noted.

The sacrifice of the Mass

St Thomas, for all his emphasis on the Eucharist as Communion, points out in a number of places that 'this sacrament is also a sacrifice' (46). In contrast to this he echoes the Epistle to the Hebrews in saying that Christ 'was offered once' and that 'by one oblation he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified', a fact which excludes the necessity, and even the possibility, of repetition of the sacrifice (47). The notion that he

(46) - Cf. III, q. 63, a. 6; q. 73, a. 4; q. 79, a. 5 : 'Hoc sacramentum simul est et sacrificium et sacramentum'; q. 79, a. 7; q. 82, a. 4; a. 10; q. 83, a. 1, ad 1.

(47) - Heb., 9:28; 10:14; cf. St Thomas, In ad Heb., c.10, lect. 1 (499): '... sedet tamquam Dominus, et non tamquam minister, sicut sacerdos legalis, quia ille per hostiam unam non aufererat peccata, et ideo oportebat plures alias offerre et frequenter... Sed hostia quam Christus obtulit, aufert omnia peccata.'

uses to reconcile these apparently contradictory assertions, namely, that of the Mass as a 'memorial' of the Passion, is one that is apt to appear insufficient to modern theologians. Yet it is repeated so often in the Tertia Pars of the Eucharist either as sacrifice or as sacrament that it must be accepted as a key-notion for St Thomas. Its psychological, humanistic overtones at once place the Mass in the context of signs of faith (48). In one place St Thomas goes so far as to say that Christ can be said to have been immolated in the figurative sacrifices of the Old Law in the same way as he is in the Mass considered simply as a memorial of the Passion (49).

(48) - Cf. III, q. 66, a. 9, ad 5: repraesentativum Dominicae mortis et passionis; q. 73, a. 4: commemorativum Dominicae passionis; q. 73, a. 5: aliquod repraesentativum Dominicae passionis; q. 74, a. 1: memoriale Dominicae passionis; q. 79, a. 7: 'Inquantum enim in hoc sacramento repraesentatur passio Christi, qua Christus "obtulit se hostiam Deo", ut dicitur Ephes., 5, habet rationem sacrificii'; q. 80, a. 10, ad 2: memoriale passionis Christi; q. 80, a. 12, ad 3: repraesentatio Dominicae passionis; q. 76, a. 2, ad 1; ad 2; q. 77, a. 7: sacramentum Dominicae passionis; q. 78, a. 3, ad 2; q. 79, a. 1; a. 2; q. 83, a. 1, ad 1: exemplum (from Ambrose); In IV Sent., d. 13, q. 1, a. 1, sol. 2 (p. 548, n. 29); etc.

(49) - III, q. 83, a. 1: 'Celebratio huius sacramenti ... imago est quaedam repraesentativa passionis Christi, quae est vera immolatio.... Quantum ad (istum) modum poterat Christus dici immolari etiam in figuris veteris Testamenti.'

That the Mass is something more than the sacrifice of the Temple St Thomas attributes to the Real Presence (50); and this at once leads him beyond the realm of sacrifice on which recent liturgists have concentrated their attention into that of Communion. This significant ambivalence that the Eucharist has for St Thomas, taking into account, as it does, what is contained in the sacrament both by concomitance and vi sacramenti (51), and envisaging the Mass not merely as a sacrifice but as a sacrifice of which the victim is a sacrament of grace, is expressed by him proleptically:

'In this sacrament memory is made of the Passion of Christ, as bringing its effect to the faithful' (52).

(50) - Cf. III, q. 73, a. 5, ad 2: 'Eucharistia est sacramentum perfectum Dominicae passionis, tamquam continens ipsum Christum passum.'

(51) - Cf. III, q. 76, a. 1.

(52) - III, q. 83, a. 2, ad 1: 'In hoc sacramento recolitur passio Christi secundum quod eius effectus ad fideles derivatur'; Cf. III, q. 79, a. 1: 'Effectus huius sacramenti debet considerari primo quidem et principaliter ex eo quod in hoc sacramento continetur, quod est Christus.... Secunde consideratur ex eo quod per hoc sacramentum repraesentatur, quod est passio Christi'; In IV Sent., d. 13, q. 1, a. 2, sol. 3, ad 1 (p. 555, n. 75): 'Passio Christi prout in capite contingit, semel tantum in anno repraesentatur in Ecclesia; sed prout in nos ejus effectus provenit

There is a similarity between phrases like this and those used later by the Council of Trent (53).

Because of his emphasis on the fruits of the Mass and on Communion, St Thomas offers no ready-made 'theory' of the sacrifice; but Abbot Vonier's sacrament-sacrifice theory, according to which the double consecration symbolizes

./.. - quotidie debet repraesentari'. The most important formulation of this idea is to be found in those texts where the Mass is said to be a sacrifice under the form of a meal; e.g., III, q. 66, a. 9, ad 5 : 'In sacramento Eucharistiae commemoratur mors Christi inquantum ipse Christus passus nobis exhibetur quasi paschale convivium; secundum illud I Cor., 5: 'Pascha nostrum immolatus est Christus; itaque epulemur''; see below. St Thomas's insistence on the Real Presence and relegation of the sacrifice to a secondary place chimes with Pius XII in his address to those taking part in the International Congress of Pastoral Liturgy (Assisi), 22 September 1956 (cf. 'L'Osservatore Romano', 23 Sept. 1956), correcting a tendency of modern liturgists: 'On se contente du sacrifice de l'autel, et l'on diminue l'importance de Celui qui l'accomplit. Or, la personne du Seigneur doit occuper le centre du culte, car c'est elle qui unifie les relations de l'autel et du tabernacle et leur donne leur sens.'

(53) - Council of Trent, sess. 22, cap. 1 (Denz. 938): 'Deus et Dominus noster ... in coena novissima, qua nocte tradebatur, ut dilectae sponsae suae Ecclesiae visibile (sicut hominum natura exigit) relinqueret sacrificium, quo cruentum illud semel in cruce peragendum repraesentaretur eiusque memoria in finem usque saeculi permaneret, atque illius salutaris virtus in remissionem eorum, quae a nobis quotidie committuntur, peccatorum applicaretur, etc. ...' PIUS XII, in the Encyclical Letter, Mediator Dei, possibly to exclude a Caselian interpretation of

and effects sacramentally the Passion of Christ, appears to interpret faithfully his theology (54). Of themselves, however, the separately consecrated species constitute only a very perfect sign of Calvary. They represent the visible, natural sacrifice; but this is insufficient to make the Mass a true and proper sacrifice. For that is required an active offering of the victim; and, according to Thomists, it is Christ himself who actually, not merely virtually, makes this offering. Theologians, even Thomists, differ as to whether the cross and the Mass are numerically

./ - 'repraesentaretur', speaks of 'memorialis demonstratio' (cf. AAS 39 (1947) p. 548).

(54) - A. VONIER, O.S.B., A Key to the Doctrine of the Eucharist, 2nd imp., London, 1931. A more recent and clear account of this theory is to be found in B. DURST, O.S.B., Das Wesen der Eucharistiefeier und des christlichen Priestertums, Studia Anselmiana, no. 32, Rome, 1953. - Concerning the relation between the sacrifice of the cross and the Mass, the Council of Trent confines itself to saying (sess. 22, cap. 2 (Denz. 940)): 'Una enim eademque est hostia, idem nunc offerens sacerdotum ministerio, qui se ipsum tunc in cruce obtulit, sola offerendi ratione diversa.' PIUS XII, in Mediator Dei, more clearly, speaks of the double consecration as the symbol of the Passion (cf. AAS 39 (1947) p. 548). Cf. III, q. 74, a. 1; q. 80, a. 12, ad 3: 'Repraesentatio Dominicae passionis agitur in ipsa consecratione huius sacramenti, in qua non debet corpus sine sanguine consecrari'; In Matt., c. 26, n. 4 (2191): '... rememorativum Dominicae passionis. Et non potuit melius significare quam sic, ut significetur sanguis ut effusus et separatus a corpore'.

identical or not (55). The question remains unresolved; but it is hard to see how the unique character of Christ's sacrifice on Calvary is to be preserved if the Mass differs from it in any way except in the mode of offering (56).

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- (55) - Among recent writers, DURST, op. cit., pp. 59, 60, asserts that Christ elicits a new act of offering for each Mass; cp. ib. p. 76, n. 13. This appears to be the opinion of the SALMANTICENSES, tr. 23, disp. 13, dub. 3 nn. 49, 50. CAJETAN, on the contrary, says, De sacrificio Missae adversus Lutheranos (Opusc. omnia, Lyons, 1567, tome 3, tr. 10, pp. 285 f.), 6: 'Non posse affirmari proprie loquendo duo sacrificia, aut duas hostias, aut duas oblationes in Novo Testamento'. Identity, in some form or other, is taught in recent years by A. VONIER, op. cit., passim; R. GARRIGOU-LAGRANGE, O.P., An Christus non solum virtualiter sed actualiter offerat Missas, Ang. 19 (1942) pp. 105-118; Ch. HERIS, O.P., The Mystery of Christ (Le mystère du Christ, tr. by D. Fahey, C.S. Sp.), Cork, 1950, pp. 204-206; E. MASURE, The Christian sacrifice (Le sacrifice du Chef, Eng. tr.), London, 1944, Bk. 3, passim; P. RUPPRECHT, O.S.B., Sacrificium Mediatoris. Die Opferanschauungen des Aquinaten (6 parts), DTF 11 (1933) p. 338. Cf. III. q. 83, a. 1, ad 1: 'Sicut Ambrosius dicit ... hoc autem sacrificium exemplum est iklus. Sicut enim quod ubique offertur unum est corpus et non multa corpora, ita et unum sacrificium.'
- (56) - Various proposals have been made to explain how there can be identity between cross and Mass. W. BARDEN, O. P., What happens at Mass, Dublin, 1950, pp. 83-96, distinguishes between the external act of oblation in Christ's practical intellect and his primary, interior, acts of devotion and prayer, and suggests that the former is maintained unchanged by one, aeviternal act, governed by Christ's angelic knowledge. It is by this act that Christ offers each

It is the office of the celebrant to perform this sacramental representation of Calvary. This he does by his power of transsubstantiation, a power held by none but the priest (57). In this sense the priest offers the sacrifice of Christ instrumentally, taking the place of Christ sacramentally (58).

The Mass, therefore, gives a temporal, sacramental extension to Calvary so that the charity of Christ that was expressed outwardly in sacrificial form by the cruci-

./ . - and every Christian sacrifice, either naturally (on Calvary) or sacramentally (at the Last Supper and at Mass). P.M. MATTHIJS, O.P., De aeternitate sacerdotii Christi (Questiones speciales theologiae speculativae, n. V, Inst. Pont. Internat. 'Angelicum', Rome, 1954-1955 - pro manuscripto), p. 34, proposes that Christ, at the Last Supper, offered a sacramental sacrifice, at the same time commanding his Apostles to offer in memory of him. This act of institution of the Eucharist and the priesthood reaches all places and times by Christ's divine power, producing its effect instrumentally through priests. - Granted that God can apply instrumentally now, an action that took place in the past, the latter theory is simpler and ensures perfect unity. M. solves this difficulty, pp. 26, 27, quoting III, q. 56, a. 1, ad 3, and In I Cor., c. 15, lect. 2 (915).

(57) - Cf. III, q. 82, a. 10, ad 1; a. 1, ad 2.

(58) - Cf. III, q. 82, a. 1: 'Hoc sacramentum est tantae dignitatis quod non conficitur nisi in persona Christi'; q. 82, a. 2, ad 2; a. 3; a. 5; a. 7, ad 3; q. 83, a. 1, ad 3: 'Sacerdos gerit imaginem Christi in cuius persona et virtute verba pronuntiat ad consecrandum. ... Et ita quodammodo idem est sacerdos et hostia'; q. 78, a. 1.

fixion is now actually signified by the species of bread and wine that contain the Body and Blood of Christ. It is this relation of signification, proper to an external act of religion, that gives value to the Mass, just as it gave it to the crucifixion (59). What is to be noted is that, though the Mass as the sacrifice of Christ gives infinite honour to God and is of infinite value in itself to men, this is precisely the honour and value of Calvary (60). The sacramental representation adds nothing to this. It might be said, if it is understood properly, that as far as the personal worship of Christ as Head goes, the Mass is an irrelevance. The whole purpose of the sacramental sacrifice is that it should be the sacrifice of the Church, and this not simply as an empty ceremonial, however holy in itself, but as a sign of the charity of men (61).

(59) - Cf. III, q. 48, a. 2; a. 3: 'Hoc ipsum opus quod voluntarie passionem sustinuit fuit Deo maxime acceptum, utpote ex caritate proveniens'; ib., ad 3; cf. II-II, q. 85, a. 1.

(60) - Theologians put it that it is of infinite value in actu primo and sufficiently, not efficaciously; cf. SALMANTICENSES, tr. 23, disp. 13, dub. 6.

(61) - Cf. III, q. 82, a. 7, ad 1: commenting on texts of (pseudo-) Augustine ('Extra Ecclesiam catholicam non est locus veri sacrificii') and Leo ('Aliter [sc. quam in Ecclesia quae est corpus Christi] nec rata sunt sacerdotia nec vera sacrificia'), St. Thomas says :
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Christ's sacrifice cannot be repeated, but the personal sacrifice of the Church can, and must, be repeated continually; and, since there is only one definitive, absolute sacrifice in the New Law, namely, the historic sacrifice of Calvary, the Church must make each of her sacrifices an offering of that sacrifice; and this she does by offering the sacrament of that sacrifice. The problem to be solved is: how is the charity of the Church, therefore of the individual faithful, expressed by the sacrifice of the Mass ?

The worship of the faithful in the Mass

Although the commentators of St Thomas devote several pages to their replies to the questions: - who offers the Mass ? - and, for whom is the Mass offered ? - they place their discussion in a canonical, rather than a liturgical

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- ./.. - 'Extra Ecclesiam non potest esse spirituale sacrificium quod est verum veritate fructus, licet sit verum veritate sacramenti'; q. 63, a. 6: '... Ecclesiae sacrificium'. Cf. CAJETAN, De celebratione Missae (Opusc. omnia, Lyons, 1567, tome 2, tr. 3, pp. 146 f.), 2: 'Loquendo de effectu huius sacrificii ex solo opere operato secundum se, patet nullum habere particularem effectum in quocumque homine.'

or sacramental, context (62). They are concerned with the theological implications of the Church law on stipends, on offering Mass for those not in communion with the Church, and so on. The question of participation in the Mass as stated by modern theologians, namely, the question of how exactly the faithful join in the offering of the Body and the Blood, they pass over with one or other variation on a formula found in its typical form in Dom. Soto: the whole Christian people offer 'in a very general fashion and mediate, that is, through the priest ... through the hands of the priest'; those present at Mass offer 'in a more particular, but still general, fashion' (63).

Any attempt to evaluate the liturgical significance

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- (62) - Cf. CAJETAN, JOHN OF ST THOMAS, GONET, SALMANTICENSES, BILLUART, in their commentaries on III, q. 82 : De ministro Eucharistiae; and q. 83: De sacrificio Missae; and q. 75, a. 5: De effectu sacrificii ; Dom. SOTO, In IV Sent., d. 13, q. 2; CAJETAN, De celebratione Missae, and De Missae sacrificio.
- (63) - Dom. SOTO, loc. cit., a. 1: '... generalissime et mediate, hoc est per sacerdotem ... per manus sacerdotum ... particularius, sed tamen etiam quodammodo generaliter'; op. SALMANTICENSES, tr. 23, d. 13, dub. 3, n. 52; GONET, De sacramentis, disp. 11, a.3, distinguishing the part taken in the external ritual by the deacons, the acolytes, the choir, and so on.

of these token formulae must begin by restoring them to their place in the sacramental theology of St Thomas. He himself nowhere gives a reasoned statement on lay participation, because for him, no less than for his commentators, the question was not an actual one. It is only in recent years that theologians, with the encouragement and guidance of the Church, have attempted to give explicit and systematic form to a belief that has always been acknowledged by the Christian conscience. Nevertheless, the elements of a solution to the problem are, it appears, to be found in St Thomas's general teaching on the sacraments and in particular on the Eucharist and the baptismal character. What follows is an attempt to formulate this solution. A brief review of the explicit teaching of St Thomas, of the more precise ideas put forward in recent papal pronouncements, and finally of the approaches to the problem made by some theologians, introduces this suggested solution.

St Thomas's explicit teaching

St Thomas's ideas on priesthood and on the offering of sacrifice are based on the Epistle to the Hebrews, and thus primarily on the concept of the Old-Testament priest-

hood as a figure of Christ (64). Consequently, he speaks of the priest as 'offering' the Mass 'for' the people. 'For' (pro) in this context has two senses for St Thomas. It can mean 'for the benefit of', to indicate the disposal of the fruits of the Mass (65). It can also mean 'on behalf of' or 'in the person of' (66). The people are said to offer their gifts at the offertory - a reference to the offertory

- (64) - Cf. I-II, q. 102; III, q. 22, a. 1, Sed c.; q. 41, a. 1; ad 3; q. 59, a. 2; q. 22, a. 4, ad 1. Heb., 5:1 ('Omnis namque pontifex ex hominibus assumptus pro hominibus constituitur in iis quae sunt ad Deum, ut offerat dona et sacrificia pro peccatis') is quoted in I-II, q. 101, a. 4, ad 5; q. 105, a. 1, obj. 4; II-II, q. 86, a. 2; III, q. 22, a. 1; a. 2; q. 64, a. 7, Sed c.; q. 83, a. 4, ad 6; Supp., q. 19, a. 3, Sed c. 2; Cont. Gent., IV, cap. 74.
- (65) - Cf. III, q. 79, a. 7: '... pro omnibus sumentibus offertur ... Aliis, qui non sumunt, prodest per modum sacrificii inquantum pro salute eorum offertur'; q. 83, a. 4: 'Commemorat ... illos pro quibus hoc sacrificium offertur, scilicet, pro universali Ecclesia'; q. 83, a. 4, ad 6 (quoting Heb., 5:1); possibly q. 83, a. 4, ad 5 (quoted below, n. 71).
- (66) - Cf. III, q. 80, a. 12, ad 3: 'Sacerdos in persona omnium sanguinem offert et sumit'; q. 82, a. 3: '... ad (sacerdotem) pertinet dona populi Deo offerre'; I-II, q. 102, a. 4, ad 6 (of the Temple sacrifices): 'In atrio extra tabernaculum continebatur altare holocaustorum, in quo offerebantur Deo sacrificia de his quae erant a populo possessa. Et ideo in atrio poterat esse populus, qui huiusmodi Deo offerebat per manus sacerdotum. Sed ad altare interius, in quo ipsa devotio et sanctitas populi Deo offerebatur, non poterat accedere nisi sacerdotes quorum erat Deo offerre populum'.

procession (67). There are besides a few texts where 'offerers' are spoken of; and it is not clear in what sense this is to be understood; possibly of the person who offers a stipend (68). It is clearly stated that the offering made by the priest is an external sacrifice, not depending on his interior dispositions, even though these ought to correspond to his actions (69). It is also clear that, though the external offering made by the priest has an intrinsic value (70), the people are called on to participate by devotion and prayer (71). Texts of this

(67) - Cf. III, q. 83, a.4; Supp., q. 37, a. 4, ad 3.

(68) - Cf. III, q. 83, a. 4: 'Sacerdos secreto commemorat... specialiter quosdam "qui offerunt ..."' - a quotation from the Canon of the Mass, to the interpretation of which St Thomas does not commit himself; q. 83, a.1, ad 1: 'Una est hostia', quam scilicet Christus obtulit et nos offerimus'; q. 79, a. 5.

(69) - Cf. III, q. 82, a. 4: 'Exterius sacrificium quod offert, signum est interioris sacrificii ...'; q.82, a. 5; a. 6; a. 7; a. 8 (all of these concerning Mass offered by sinners, heretics, etc.).

(70) - Cf. I-II, q. 102, a. 4, ad 3: 'Ipsam sacrificium Ecclesiae spirituale est' (see context).

(71) - Cf. III, q. 79, a. 5: 'Quamvis haec oblatio ex sui quantitate sufficiat ad satisfaciendum pro omni poena, tamen fit satisfactoria illis pro quibus offertur, vel etiam offerentibus, secundum quantitatem suae devotionis, et non pro tota poena'; q. 83, a. 4; ad 5: 'In hoc sacramento requiritur devotio totius populi, pro quo sacrificium offertur...'; q. 82, a. 1, ad 2; In IV Sent., d. 13, q. 1, a. 1, sol. 1, ad 1 (p. 548, n. 25): 'Omnis bonus homo

nature are comparatively rare because of St Thomas's interest in the fruit of the sacrifice of Christ rather than in the sacrifice of the people. According to one of St Thomas's most significant texts for this matter - he is speaking explicitly of the priest, but his principle is of general application - participation in the fruits of the Mass by sacramental Communion is a public profession that one has made the interior oblation of oneself that is signified by the exterior sacrifice (72).

Papal teaching

The teaching of the Church on the matter, up to the time of Pius XI, offers no more definite ideas than those of St Thomas (73). The Council of Trent urges that all

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- dicitur sacerdos mystice; quia scilicet mysticum sacrificium [al. sacerdotium] Deo offert seipsum'.
 - (72) - III, q. 82, a. 4: 'Exterius sacrificium quod offert, signum est interioris sacrificii quo quis seipsum offert Deo: ut Augustinus dicit, X de Civ. Dei, Unde per hoc quod participat sacrificio, ostendit ad se sacrificium interius pertinere'.
 - (73) - Cf. condemnations of anti-clerical heresies, insisting on the prerogatives of the ordained priesthood: INNOCENT III, Profession of faith prescribed for the Waldenses (Denz. 424); IV Lateran Council, c. 1, against the Albigenses (Denz. 430). A more positive theme: the water added to the wine at Mass signifies the union of the faithful with

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the faithful should attend Mass with faith, reverence and contrition, but is content to say impersonally of the Mass; offertur; and finally it recommends that the faithful should take part 'not only by interior desire, but also by sacramental reception of the Eucharist' (74).

Pius XI, in his Encyclical Letter, Miserentissimus Redemptor (75), introduces a remarkable development in the expression of the doctrine. The spiritual sacrifice of the faithful, he declares, is to be associated with the sacrifice of the Mass in order to fill up what is wanting to the sufferings of Christ. The faithful, he goes on, called a 'royal priesthood' by St Peter, must offer for their own and other's sins, 'in a manner hardly differing from that in which every priest offers' (76).

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- Christ: Council of Florence, Decr. for the Armenians (Denz. 698); Council of Trent, sess. 22, c. 7 (Denz. 945).
 - (74) - Council of Trent, sess. 22, c. 2 (Denz. 940); c. 6 (Denz. 944).
 - (75) - 8 May 1928; cf. AAS 20 (1928) pp. 165 f.
 - (76) - Loc. cit., pp. 171, 172: 'Neque enim arcani huius sacerdotii et satisfaciendi sacrificandique muneris participatione ii soli fruuntur quibus Pontifex noster Christus Iesus administris utitur ad oblationem mundam ... offerendam, sed etiam christianorum gens universa ab Apostolorum Principe "genus electum, regale sacerdotium" iure appellata, debet cum pro se, tum pro toto humano genere offerre
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Pius XII, Encyclical Letter, Mystici corporis (77), in a brief reference to the Mass, says that the faithful, united with the priest by their intentions and prayers, offer to the eternal Father, for the needs of the whole Church, the most pleasing Victim which has been made present by the voice of the priest alone (78). In a series of later pronouncements, Pius XII insists again on the incommunicable nature of the priesthood of orders and on the divine source of its liturgical mediation (79). The priest acts in the name of the people 'precisely and solely because he represents the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, considered as Head of all the members' (80). Only

- ././ - pro peccatis, haud aliter propemodum quam sacerdos omnis ac pontifex "ex hominibus assumptus ...".'
- (77) - 29 June 1943; cf. AAS 35 (1943) pp. 193 f.
- (78) - Loc. cit., pp. 232, 233: 'Itemque in eo christifideles ipsimet immaculatum Agnum, unius sacerdotis voce in altari praesentem constitutum, communibus votis precibusque consociati, per eiusdem sacerdotis manus Aeterno Patri porrigunt.'
- (79) - Cf. Encycl. Letter, Mediator Dei, 20 Nov. 1947 (cf. AAS 39 (1947) pp. 521 f.); Address to Sacred College and Bishops, 3 Nov. 1954 (cf. AAS 46 (1954) pp. 666 f.); Address to those taking part in the Internat. Congress of Pastoral Liturgy (Assisi), 22 Sept. 1956 (cf. 'L'Osservatore Romano', 23 Sept. 1956).
- (80) - Mediator Dei (AAS vol. cit., p. 553): '... sacerdotem nempe idcirco tantum populi vices agere, quia personam gerit Domini nostri Iesu Christi, quatenus membrorum omnium Caput est, pro iisdemque semet ipsum offert.'

the priest, by pronouncing the words of consecration, can bring about the unbloody offering by which Christ is rendered present on the altar in the state of victim(81). Nevertheless, goes on Pius XII, the faithful should play an active part in the sacrifice (82); and they possess a certain priesthood related to spiritual sacrifices in the sense of I Peter, 2:9, though it is essentially different from that of the celebrant (83). He makes it clear by the whole emphasis of Mediator Dei that the principal activity of the faithful in the liturgy is that of the moral and theological virtues. Again and again he insists that the chief element in the liturgy is interiorly conceived

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- (81) - Mediator Dei (loc. cit., p. 555): 'Inermata enim illa oblatio, qua consecrationis verbis prolati Christus in statu victimae super altare praesens redditur, ab ipso solo sacerdote perficitur, prout Christi personam sustinet, non vero prout Christifidelium personam gerit.' Address of 2 Nov. 1954 (loc. cit., p. 667): 'Ubi nulla sit proprie vereque dicenda potestas sacrificandi nec inveniat^{ur} proprie vereque appellandum sacerdotium'.
- (82) - Cf. Address of 2 Nov. 1954 (loc. cit., p. 668) : 'In sacrificio activas quasdam partes habere possint et habeant.'
- (83) - Cf. ib. (loc. cit., p. 669): 'Negari vel in dubium vocari non debet fideles quoddam habere "sacerdotium", neque hoc parvi aestimare vel deprimere licet. ... At quaecumque est huius honorifici tituli et rei vera pleneque significatio, firmiter tenendum est,

worship, that there is no opposition between 'objective' and 'personal' devotion, that the faithful take part in the Eucharistic sacrifice 'with such active devotion as to be in the closest union with the High Priest', that the faithful offer themselves as victims (84). In all of this he echoes the traditional teaching handed down by the Council of Trent.

Yet there is some even more intimate way in which the faithful are involved. As is clear from statements of popes and theologians, argues Pius XII, the faithful actually offer the divine victim, though in a manner different from that in which the priest offers (85). They hold this privilege by reason of their baptism which makes them members of Christ the Priest and imprints on them a 'character' by which they are appointed to the worship of God and share in the priesthood of Christ (86). Given

./ - commune hoc omnium christifidelium, altum utique et arcanum, "sacerdotium" non gradu tantum sed etiam essentia differre a sacerdotio proprie vereque dicto ...'

(84) - Cf. Mediator Dei (loc.cit., pp.530-537, 552, 557).

(85) - Cf. ib., p. 554: 'Christifideles etiam divinam offerre hostiam diversa tamen ratione dicendi sunt; quoting Innocent III, De sacro altaris mysterio, III, 6, and St Robert Bellarmine, De Missa, I, cap. 27

(86) - Cf. ib., p. 555: 'Baptismatis lavacro generali titulo

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that the priest, acting in the person of Christ, has placed the divine Victim on the altar and is offering it to the Father, the faithful may in their own way share in this offering and for two reasons; first, because they offer the sacrifice through the priest, and secondly, because they offer it with him (87).

They offer through the priest (per sacerdotis manus) because the priest acts in the name of Christ considered as Head and as offering in the name of all the members. They also offer with the priest (una cum ipso sacerdote). In explaining this, Pius XII is concerned principally with the content of the offering, or what it signifies on the part of the offerers. The faithful, uniting 'their sentiments of praise, entreaty, expiation and thanksgiving with the sentiments or intention of the priest, indeed with those of the High Priest himself', make a spiritual offering of themselves which is caught up into the very

./ - christiani in Mystico Corpore membra efficiuntur Christi sacerdotis, et "characterem" qui eorum in animo quasi insculpitur ad cultum divinum deputantur; atque ideo ipsius Christi sacerdotium pro sua conditione participant.'

(87) - Cf. ib., p. 556.

oblation of the victim. The self-offering of Christ and that of the faithful are united, says Pius XII, by the priest's external rite and so presented to God the Father (88). He goes on to develop the function of the external rite in unifying the spiritual offering of Christ and that of the faithful.

'The external rite of worship must of its very nature be a sign of interior worship; and what is signified by the sacrifice of the New Law is that supreme homage by which Christ, the principal offerer, and with him and through him all his mystical members, pay due honour and veneration to God' (89).

The broad outlines of a solution are marked out in these papal documents. The most significant elements, in the light of St Thomas's teaching on sacramental worship, are the attribution of an undefined function to the baptismal character in the offering of the faithful, and the recognition of the central, unifying position of the visible

(88) - Cf. ib., p. 556: '... ut eadem in ipsa victimae oblatione externo quoque sacerdotis ritu, Deo Patri exhibeantur.'

(89) - Cf. ib., p. 556: 'Externus enim sacrificii ritus suapte natura cultum internum manifestet necesse est: novae autem legis Sacrificium supremum illud obsequium significat, quo ipse principalis offerens, qui Christus est, et una cum eo et per eum omnia eius mystica membra Deum honore prosequantur ac venerentur.'

species which signify the sacrifice.

Some recent solutions

Theologians, for the most part, have been content to repeat without very much comment the phrases found by the popes for expressing the faithful's part in the Mass. They have insisted on the priest's mediation and, though they have paid their respects to Pius XII's reference to the baptismal character, the majority of them thinks of it as nothing more than a moral power, a right to take part in the sacrifice of the Church. The faithful 'associate' themselves with the offering by faith (90). This solution

(90)- Cf. S. TROMP, S.J., Quo sansu in sacrificio Missae offert Ecclesia, offerunt fideles, 'Periodica' 30 (1941) pp. 265-273 (the priest offers, but 'in persona Christi et fidelium'); G. DE BROGLIE, S.J., Du rôle de l'Eglise dans le sacrifice eucharistique, NRT 70 (1948) pp. 449-460 (that Christ should worship in the Mass is 'un non-sens'; the priest's offering is the faithful's offering); id., La Messe, oblation collective de la communauté chrétienne, Greg. 30 (1949) pp. 534-561; F. PALMER, S.J., The Lay Priesthood: real or metaphorical ?, TS 8 (1947) pp. 579 f.; id., Lay Priesthood: towards a terminology, TS 10 (1949) pp. 235-250 (liturgically, the faithful offer only through the ministry of the priest: a mediate offering); J. REA, The Common Priesthood of the Members of the Mystical Body, Washington, 1947, pp. 212, 222; G. BAUER, Das heilige Messopfer, DTF

denies the problem. To offer the sacrifice of Christ by faith it is not necessary to have the Mass. It is something in itself non-sacramental, implicit in every act of virtue. The offering by the faithful at Mass must be specifically connected with the sacramental representation of Calvary.

For theologians who hold that Christ, using the minister as his physical instrument, actually offers the Mass the problem must be to associate the faithful's intention of taking part in the sacrifice with the offering of Christ himself in such wise that the external sign of his worship (that is, the sacramentally immolated Body and Blood) may be also the sign of the faithful's worship. However, almost without exception, contemporary theologians of this school are content to state the matter in these terms and to add that it is in virtue of the baptismal character that such an association is possible (91). This amounts to a

./.. - 28 (1950) pp. 25-28; J. McCARTHY, Notes, IER 83 (1955) p. 203; W.A. KAVANAGH, Lay Participation in Christ's Priesthood, Washington, 1935 (Cf. RSPT 25 (1936) pp. 757, 758). An account of various unorthodox solutions is to be found in J. BRINKTRINE, Das Amtspriestertum und das allgemeine Priestertum der Gläubigen, DTF 22 (1944) p. 308, also in La teologia e i laici, 'L'Osserv. Romano', 15 Sept. 1954.

(91) - Cf., e.g., A. KOLPING, Der aktive Anteilung der Gläubigen an der Darbringung des eucharistischen

restatement in explicitly Thomistic terms of the essential words of Mediator Dei (92).

A solution

The solution is to be sought in the relation between the Eucharist and the baptismal character. In these terms the problem is to be formulated: how does his baptismal character enable the individual Christian to designate the double consecration as the sacrificial sign of his charity?

It is to be observed first of all that the sacramental offering of the Body and Blood by the celebrant already signifies in a certain sense the worship of the faithful

./.. - Opfers, DTF 27 (1949) pp. 369-380; T. CONGAR, O.P., Jalons pour une théologie du laicat (Coll. 'Unam sanctam', n. 20), Paris, 1953, pp. 246 f., esp. p. 292 (op., however, p. 275). B. DURST., Das Wesen..., pp. 61 f., develops the matter considerably, suggesting that the faithful participate in the Mass in two ways: making the offering of the Body and Blood the sign of their interior self-oblation, and also offering 'ministerially', by reason of their baptismal characters, the worship of Christ on the cross. This appears a false dichotomy (see below). Moreover, the interpretation of the instrumentality to be attributed to the baptismal character does not correspond to the teaching of St Thomas as set out above, ch. 3.

(92) - Cf. above, n. 88.

in so far as it signifies the mediatorial worship of Christ, the Head of the Mystical Body, since his worship virtually, as the source of all merit, includes the worship of all Christians. In exactly the same way the worship of all Christians was expressed outwardly on Calvary; and this universality attaches to the Mass in so far as it is identical with Calvary. The Mass adds nothing to the merit of Calvary. What it does add, precisely as the sacrifice of the Church, offered by men, is the actual signification of the charity of those who participate, which was signified on Calvary only as included in Christ's charity, and which has now been derived from Head to members in such a way that it is formally theirs.

It is at this point that a certain clarification can be achieved using St Thomas's principles. The Mass is not a natural sacrifice; it is sacramental, the sacrament of a natural sacrifice. Although, therefore, all those who believe in Christ may 'offer' by faith and charity the sacrifice of Calvary, only those who have received the sacrament of baptism may offer the Mass in the sense of designating the double consecration as the

sacrificial sign of their charity, since baptism is the 'gate-way' to the sacraments. The sacramental Body and Blood, under the species of bread and wine, man actually signify the charity only of the baptized.

This is made clearer when the sacramental form of this sacrifice is considered. In conformity with the circumstances of its institution it takes the form of a meal. This is a central idea with St Thomas, taken from the Scriptures, referred to explicitly a number of times, and implicit in the essential concept of the Eucharist as food (93). Participation in the sacrifice is confined

(93) - Cf. III, q. 66, a. 9, ad 5: 'In sacramento Eucharistiae commemoratur mors Christi inquantum ipse Christus passus exhibetur nobis quasi paschale convivium, secundum illud I Cor., 5: "Pascha nostrum immolatus est Christus; itaque epulemur"'; q. 80, a. 10, ad 2: 'In hoc sacramento traditur nobis memoriale passionis Christi per modum cibi'; q. 73, a. 6: Utrum agnus paschalis fuerit praecipua figura huius sacramenti; q. 80, a. 6: 'mensa Dominicam'; In I Cor., c. 11, lect. 4,5 passim : e.g., lect. 5 (654): 'Offertur specialiter hoc sacramentum sub specie panis et vini. Primo quidem, quia pane et vino communius utuntur homines ad suam refectionem ...'. Eucharist is food: cf. III, q. 73, a. 1; a. 2; a. 3, ad 1; ad 2; q. 75, a. 5; q. 76, a. 1, ad 2; a. 3, ad 1; q. 78, a. 3, ad 1; q. 79, a. 1; a. 4, ad 2; a. 5; q. 80, a. 6; a. 10, ad 1; q. 81, a. 3, ad 1; etc.

to those who may receive food from the table; that is to say, to the baptized (94); and it is the character that formally gives the power of receiving (95). It is because the sacramental signs of the sacrifice of the Mass take the form of food that they can serve as the sacrificial sign of the charity of the baptized and, formally, only of the baptized. The species of bread and wine contain the Body and Blood of Christ as the Food of the soul and hence they signify the effect of that Food, namely, the unity of the Church in charity. This is an Augustinian theme that St Thomas never tires of repeating (96). It

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- (94) - Cf. III, q. 80, a. 6: 'Cum enim quilibet Christianus ex hoc ipso quod est baptizatus, sit admissus ad mensam Dominicam ...'; q. 65, a. 3: 'Sacramentum baptismi ordinatur ad Eucharistiae receptionem'; q. 67, a. 2; In Matt., c. 6, n. 3 (592): 'Ex quo quis baptizatus est, ius habet in isto pane'; ib., c. 26, n. 3 (2178): '... Nulli non baptizato debet dari huiusmodi sacramentum ... immo infideles non debet admitti ad videndum istud sacramentum; unde in primitiva Ecclesia, quando multi erant catechumeni, recipiebantur in Ecclesia usque ad Evangelium, et tunc expellebantur'.
- (95) - Cf. III, q. 82, a. 1: 'Sicut autem baptizato conceditur a Christo potestas sumendi hoc sacramentum, ita sacerdoti, cum ordinatur, confertur potestas hoc sacramentum consecrandi'; In Matt., c. 26, n. 3 (2178): 'Sicut non conficeret sacerdos nisi consecratus, sic non debet alicui illud ministrari nisi baptizato'; III, q. 63.
- (96) - Cf. III, q. 67, a. 2: sacramentum ecclesiasticae
./.

is only a short step from this idea of signification of charity as an effect of the sacrament to that of signification of the charity of the faithful as directed towards, or animating, the sacrament-sacrifice. It is a step which St Thomas would have had no difficulty in taking, as witness such texts as those in which he says that water is added to the wine at Mass so as to signify the union of the faithful with Christ; though, in fact, he understands this again of the effect of the sacrament (97).

St Thomas summarizes his teaching on the sacrament of the Eucharist :

'This is the sacrament of the body of Christ;
but the body of Christ is the Church, which

./ - unionis; q. 73, a. 2, Sed. c.; a. 3, ad 1; ad 3: sacramentum caritatis; q. 73, a. 4; q. 74, a. 1, ad 1; q. 78, a. 3, ad 6: sacramentum caritatis quasi figurativum et effectivum; q. 79, a. 1; a. 2; q. 80, a. 4; ad 1; a. 5, ad 2; q. 82, a. 2, ad 3; q. 83, a. 4; ad 3; a. 5; In I Cor., c. 11, lect. 5 (654); De art. fidei (620); In IV Sent., d. 45, q. 2, a. 3, sol. 1.

(97) - Cf. III, q. 74, a. 6: '... ad significandum effectum huius sacramenti, qui est unio populi christiani ad Christum'; q. 74, a. 7; a. 8, ad 2; q. 82, a. 3, ad 1: 'Sanguini admiscetur aqua, quae significat populum'; In Matt., c. 26, n. 4 (2193, 2194); In I Cor., c. 11, lect. 6 (684).

is raised up into the unity of a body from many faithful; hence this is the sacrament of the unity of the Church' (98)

The application of this concept of the Eucharist to the sacrifice of the Mass is in the full tradition of St Paul, I Cor., 10: 16-21, and of St Augustine in De civitate Dei, Bk. 10, ch. 6 :

'This is the sacrifice of Christians: "many who are one body in Christ". This the Church clearly and frequently repeats to the faithful in the sacrament of the altar, where it is shown that in that which she offers she is herself offered' (99).

That is to say, what is offered is the Body of Christ which (since it is the Food of the soul) symbolizes the charity that unites all members of the Church. Consequently, the offering that the Church makes symbolizes in the manner

(98) - In Joann., c. 6, n. 6 (960): 'Hoc est sacramentum corporis Christi: corpus autem Christi est Ecclesia, quae consurgit in unitatem corporis ex multis fidelibus; unde istud est sacramentum unitatis Ecclesiae'. On the typically Augustinian reasoning of this text, with its direct transition from sacramentum to res, omitting or referring ambiguously to the res et sacramentum, cf. P.-Th. CAMELOT, Réalisme et symbolisme dans la doctrine eucharistique de s Augustin, RSPT 31 (1947) pp. 394-410.

(99) - De civitate Dei, lib. 10, c. 6 (CCL 47 279): 'Hoc est sacrificium Christianorum: "multi unum corpus in Christo". Quod etiam sacramento altaris fidelibus notis frequentat ecclesia, ubi ei demonstratur, quod in ea re, quam offert, ipsa offeratur.'

proper to an external act of religion the offering of herself, that is, of all the faithful.

Only the baptized may thus participate in the Mass since the Eucharist can cause grace only in those who bear the baptismal character, and consequently can signify formally the charity only of such. The Mass is the sacrifice of those who have the power to receive the Eucharist.

There is evidently a difference between the function of the baptismal character at Mass and the one that it has in reception of the sacraments. In the latter case it is required on the part of the subject for the perfection of the sacramental sign, the opus operatum. The Mass, however, is in no sense dependent on the faithful so far as the sacramental rite goes. The sacrament is perfected at the moment of consecration and this is solely the act of the celebrant. The sacramental power of the faithful is posterior to this (posterioritate naturae). It enables them to make the sacrament-sacrifice the sign of their own charity. The baptismal character intervenes here in so far as the sacrament is of its nature suitable for signifying the charity only of those who may receive

the Eucharist. Hence the character intervenes simply as a physical entity, as something implied on the part of the faithful by the sign. It gives validity to the individual's intention of participating in the Mass, as it does to his intention of receiving the sacraments; but in a different way. In the Mass there is no question of instrumental material causality. It is because the character is a permanent quality incorporating a person into Christ sacramentally - as one qualified to use the sacraments - that it enables its subject to use the Mass as the expression of his own charity.

It is here that is to be noted the prime difference between the powers of the priestly and those of the baptismal characters in the Mass. Whereas the priestly character is effective independently of the moral dispositions of the celebrant, the intention of participation that gains validity from the baptismal character is essentially an elicited act of religion. The celebrant offers the Body and Blood as the sign of Christ's redemptive charity. The baptised Christian offers them as the sign of his own worship. In this way the Church literally fills up what is lacking in the sufferings of

Christ since the charity of her members is now explicitly signified by the identical sacrifice, sacramentally renewed, which on Calvary signified the charity of the Church only as included in Christ's.

Though the Mass is in this way the sacrifice of all the baptized, it is in a special way the sacrifice of those who are present at its celebration. Indeed, since it is a sacrament, a sign, it is only those who are present who participate in the full sense sacramentally. The congregation, grouped together into one body, acknowledging the sole competence of the celebrant to perform the ritual which is to clothe their devotion, form around the altar a sign of the Mystical Body, subordinated to the priestly mediation of its Head. Personal assistance alone satisfies fully the demands of this sacramentalism. The faithful who are not present assist sacramentally by reason of their baptism and, further, by their public adherence to the Catholic Church. There are clearly varying degrees of participation to be distinguished here, and even heretics in good faith can be truly said to offer the Mass. Finally, there is a broad sense in which even the non-baptized, if they be-

lieve in Christ, may be said to offer. This, at least, appears to be a conclusion in harmony with St Thomas's understanding of the influence of the Eucharist as extending as far as that of Christ himself (100). What St Thomas says of receiving the Holy Eucharist spiritually and not sacramentally may be applied here (101). All those who believe in Christ may 'offer' by faith and charity the sacrifice of Calvary. It follows that, since the Mass is identified with Calvary, those who believe in Christ, yet are not baptized, may also 'offer' the Mass by faith and charity; but they can do this precisely in the measure that the Mass is identified with Calvary and is the sacrifice offered by Christ ; not, therefore, formally as a sacramental sacrifice offered by the Church, since the sacramental signs do not belong to them. The sacrifice that they immediately 'offer' by faith is the

(100) - Cf. III, q. 73, a. 3.

(101) - Cf. III, q. 80, a. 1, ad 3: 'Aliqui manducant spiritualiter hoc sacramentum antequam sacramentaliter sumant. Sed hoc contingit dupliciter. Uno modo, propter desiderium sumendi ipsum sacramentum; et hoc modo dicuntur baptizari et manducare spiritualiter et non sacramentaliter illi qui desiderant sumere haec sacramenta iam instituta. Alio modo propter figuram ...'

natural sacrifice of Calvary; only indirectly, therefore, can they 'offer' the Mass. Such an 'offering', by definition, can have no effect ex opere operato.

Because the baptized faithful can offer sacramentally the sacrifice of Christ himself their worship takes on new and wonderful qualities. It procures the proper effects of sacrifice: in particular, it makes satisfaction for sin (102), and it placates God (103); it honours him and procures the salvation of the living and the dead (104). The effect or fruit of this offering can be measured only by God. What is certain is that it corresponds to the charity of Christ in proportion to the degree of charity of the individual members of the faithful (105).

(102) - Cf. III, q. 48, a. 2; ad 1.

(103) - Cf. III, q. 48, a. 3; a. 6, ad 3; q. 49, a. 4.

(104) - Cf. In IV Sent., d. 13, q. 1, a. 2, sol. 1
(p. 554, n. 66).

(105) - Cf. In IV Sent., d. 13, q. 1, a. 2, sol. 3, ad 3
(p. 556, n. 78): 'Omnis nostra actio per Christum perfici debet. Et ideo ... oportet quod ... Missa in Ecclesia celebretur'; III, q. 79, a. 5 :
'Quamvis haec oblatio ex sui quantitate [cf. III, q. 48, a. 2] sufficiat ad satisfaciendum pro omni poena, tamen fit satisfactoria illis pro quibus offertur, vel etiam offerentibus, secundum quantitatem suae devotionis, et non pro tota poena';
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This second element is determined by many factors: actual presence at Mass, offering of a stipend, the quality of the intention of participating (actual, virtual, habitual), the fervour of the act of charity. In so far as the fruit exceeds the strict merits of the individual it is ex opere operato, produced, that is, through the due performance of the prescribed ritual by the priest.

To celebrate Mass, to procure the sacramental sacrifice of Christ, an ordained priest is sufficient. Much more is required - and is always supplied - if the Mass is to be truly the sacrifice of the Church. For that there is demanded of the faithful - priests as well as laity - moral effort, a life of virtue, spiritual sacrifices - all that the Fathers insisted on when they spoke of the 'royal priesthood' of the faithful. This immolation, writes Pius XII,

./.. - q. 49, a. 3, ad 2: '... multo minor sufficit (poenalitas) quam esset condigna peccato, cooperante satisfactione Christi'; Cf. III, q. 49, a. 1, ad 4; a. 3, ad 1; CAJETAN, De celebratione Missae, works out in mathematical proportions the fruit for the offerers and for those for whom they offer, taking into account the devotion of each.

'is not restricted to the liturgical sacrifice... But, inevitably, it is when the faithful are taking part in the liturgical action with such faith and devotion that it may be truly said that their "faith and devotion are known to Thee", that their faith will more eagerly work by charity and their devotion grow more fervent' (106).

The Mass 'means' union with Christ: it presupposes such union, at least in an initial degree; and it promotes union. Today's Mass is consummated in the offering of tomorrow's Mass (107). The daily sacrifice draws the whole life of the Church into the sacrifice of Christ, announcing the death of the Lord until he come.

Conclusions

I Reception of the sacraments is an act of worship.

The inner dispositions with which the subject approaches a sacrament are expressed outwardly by the opus operatum, not in its entirety (as such it is a common action of minister and subject and not, therefore, elicited by the subject alone), but by that part of it which is pro-

(106) - Mediator Dei, loc. cit., pp. 557, 558.

(107) - Cf. III, q. 82, a. 7: '... fructum sacrificii ... quod est sacrificium spirituale.'

duced by the subject; in other words, by the reception of the sacrament. It is question here of the sacrament as sign, prior to its causality; and the intervention of the baptismal character, procuring valid reception, is presupposed.

II It is by reason of the faith of the Church alone that sacraments administered to unconscious subjects are acts of worship. In the case of those who previously had the use of reason habitual dispositions on the part of the subject are implied in this act of worship.

III The act of reception is elicited by the remote dispositions for sacramental grace, which remain, at least virtually, at the moment when the sacrament acts. Both grace and the proximate dispositions for it are signified at this moment, not as eliciting the act of reception, but as the effect of the sacrament.

IV The full opus operans of the subject consists in his remote dispositions and in his intention of receiving the sacrament.

V The sacrifice of Christ is sacramentally represented in the Mass under the form of a meal. Because the Body and Blood of Christ are thus present as food they signify

not only the redemptive charity of Christ but also the charity of all those who have the power of eating Christ sacramentally. It is the baptismal character that gives this power; and hence it is it too that makes the faithful's intention of participating in the Mass valid. The offering of the Mass by the faithful consists, therefore, essentially in acts of charity. The character, as a permanent, sacramental incorporation into the Mystical Body of Christ enables its subject to designate the sacramental Body and Blood as the sacrificial sign of his charity. In the Mass the opus operatum is produced by the priest alone. It serves as the sign of the opus operans of the faithful. At Mass, consequently, the sacrifice of Christ signifies actually charity which on Calvary was signified only as included in Christ's, and which has now been derived to the members of Christ.

VI Personal assistance alone satisfies fully the sacramentalism of the Mass, but all the baptized can offer sacramentally by reason of their characters. In a broad sense, even the non-baptized may 'offer' the Mass by faith and charity, in so far as it is the sacrifice of Christ, identified with Calvary.

C O N C L U S I O N

For individual conclusions reference should be made to the end of each chapter. As a conclusion to the whole study the following definitions and observations are proposed.

Opus operatum. In those sacraments that exist only at the moment of use the opus operatum is the common act of wor^rship performed by minister and subject in so far as, by reason of the words spoken and the things used in accordance with the prescriptions of the Church, it signifies the giving of grace to, and the actual reception of grace by, the subject. In the Eucharist the opus operatum is the action of the priest and the sacrament itself, though for Communion the sign consists in the eating of the Host by the subject.

Opus operans. In both minister and subject, for sacraments other than the Eucharist, the opus operans is two-fold: i) use of the sacrament with the intention of administering or receiving what the Church administers;

this is essential for validity in that, without the minister's intention there is no sacrament, and without the subject's intention the sign-action of reception is in no way true; ii) the worshipful use of the sacrament; this is required for the sign-action to be wholly true and hence fruitful. The opus operans of the subject varies according to his state of consciousness, since this determines the nature of the sign. At Mass the opus operans of the faithful is their worship as directed towards the Eucharist. Its absence in no way affects validity.

Relation between the two. The opus operatum of those sacraments that are perfected at the moment of use is constituted by the opus operans of minister and subject in so far as their external actions together with the material elements on which these actions bear form the sign prescribed. It is this sign that, by reason of its institution by Christ, bears an intrinsic value. Hence its designation as opus operatum. The priestly and baptismal characters (when they are required) bring it about that the actions performed by minister and subject form a valid sacramental sign, that is, one which, by the

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very fact that it is formed by the appointed persons, signifies not merely human worship but also the divine decree of justifying through the merits and physical intervention of Christ and through this individual ceremony. In this sense the opus operatum may be said to be the opus Dei or the opus Christi which minister and subject serve 'instrumentally', one forming the active element of the sign, the other the passive element.

Efficacy ex opere operato. After the opus operatum has been validly and worthily set up (posterieritate naturae) the material, physical reality of those elements of the act of worship that signify the giving of grace are elevated and applied as the instruments of God, operating through the humanity of Christ, so that they actually cause grace. Certain sacraments produce an effect ex opere operato when the opus operatum has been validly set up but is not a personal act of worship of the subject.

It is because priests and people participate in the priesthood of Christ by their sacramental characters that the worship of the faithful in the Church is

inserted into the very sacrifice of Christ at Mass and that the perfection of man which is procured by worship is extended from Christ the Priest to his members in the sacraments. Mass and sacraments provide an intensification of the essential union with Christ that is forged ^{by faith} and charity. In the first instance they afford simply that outward expression of faith that the nature of man requires. It is because Christ himself has chosen to be active in these human ceremonies that they draw the worshipping creature into a union with God far closer than his own action merits. There is no opposition between faith and the sacraments, no opposition between opus operans and opus operatum, no opposition between private prayers and the liturgy. These are the words of Pope Pius XII on which these pages are a commentary. 'The two', he goes on, 'are harmoniously blended because they are both animated by the same spirit: "There is nothing but Christ in any of us" (1). Their purpose is the same: 'to form Christ in us' (2).

(1) - Coloss., 3:11 (Knox trans.)

(2) - PIUS XII, Mediator Dei (AAS 39 (1947) p. 537)
cf. Gal., 4:19.

INDEX OF TEXTS IN WHICH ST THOMAS USES THE TERMS, OPUS
OPERANS, OPUS OPERATUM (Cf. Chapter one)

In III Sent., d. 18, a. 1 pp. 37 f., 73.

d. 20, a. 5, sol. 2, ad 3 p. 28.

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 52, 62.

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- d. 8, q. 1, a. 2, q1a. 2, obj. 5 p. 56.
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- q. 71, a. 6, ad 4 p. 41.
- q. 79, a. 1, ad 3 p. 51.

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